

HAS YOUR CONSCIENCE BEEN HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTED?

TRUE CONVICTION OR FALSE CONVICTION, WHICH?

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11

“And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.” John 8:9

“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;” 1 Tim. 4:1-2

By Pastor Del Wray

Woe unto the inhabitants of America! Americans are “guilty”! We have become a stiffnecked nation of child murderers, fornicators, liars, idolaters, Bible-corrupters, whores, homosexuals, pornographers, promise breakers, feminists, drunkards, gamblers and perverts. It couldn't be any clearer! Churches have sacrificed their need for their wants. God has given our churches who they want to lead them and not whom they need. Our wants trump our need! Where will it end? Where will you be a million years from now?

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God...”

Did you see that word, “jealous”? Do you think God isn't jealous when you think more of some singing group than you do of preaching the Word of God? But you say, "Wait a minute, I don't worship any singing group as a god." You don't? You put anything before preaching the Word of God it becomes an idol, idolatry! That includes your pastor!

“And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.” Matthew 11:23

To live in a day as we do today, and to see and hear Bible believing Baptist pastors, so they say, denying the Word of God and calling out God making Him a liar is unthinkable. Insisting God

hates no one! Its beyond my imagination, their consciences seared to the point that everyone no matter how vile are to be loved and none hated. Men's minds are comatose to any speech negative while drowning in the love of self-credence. What bitterness lies in the hearts and minds of men who will be found out to be God haters themselves and void of conscience? A pastor in our ranks said to me on the subject of "God's hatred for homosexuals" in a post "that's why I haven't said anything, I don't hate anyone." In other words he refuses to hate what God hates. That man has had his conscience seared or he's lost what conscience he had!

The sobering fact is that God is so holy and righteous that He hates the sinner Psalm 5:5; Lev. 20:23; Prov. 6:16-19; Hos. 9:15. Some say that we should say that God only hates the sin but loves the sinner. But, the above Scriptures speak contrary to that.

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Romans 9:13

CONSCIENCE, AN EXPLANATION:

In the Bible, during creation God imprinted into the nature of man His Divine Image, which draws man toward everything that is morally good and averts him from everything that is morally evil. This inner law works through the voice of conscience, which justly is called the voice of God in man. And it will not work contrary to the Word of God. Because it is an integral part of human nature, it is active in all people regardless of their age, race, education, or development.

Once an indigent woman stole something in a store and carried it away. No one saw her. On her way home a disturbing feeling gnawed at her peace of mind. She had to return to the store and replace the stolen item, after which she returned home feeling relieved. There are countless similar examples of people being compelled to do not what they want but what is right.

"Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ." 1 Peter 3:16

Every person is familiar with his inner voice which on occasion accuses and oppresses him, and on occasion brings him joy. This small subtle voice, an inborn feeling, is called conscience. Conscience by its nature is a spiritual instinct, just as sin is and inward instinct, which more clearly and quickly differentiates between good and evil than does the mind. He who listens to the voice of his conscience will never regret or be ashamed of his behavior. As to one must be careful and distinguish between the voice of his conscience, which is a God given protective measure, and cannot or will never lead contrary to the Bible, while the devil counterfeits with his attacks on the mind!

In the Holy Scripture conscience is also called "heart." In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord Jesus Christ compared conscience to the "eyes" by which a person can evaluate his moral condition, Matthew says:

"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Matt. 6:22.

The Lord also compared conscience to a "rival" with whom a person must come to terms before he presents himself at God's Judgment Matt. 5:25. The word "rival" stresses the main attribute of conscience: to oppose our evil desires and intentions.

Our personal experience convinces us that this inner voice, called conscience, is not under our control but expresses itself spontaneously in spite of our will. In addition, just as we cannot persuade ourselves that we are full when we are hungry or that we are rested when we are tired, similarly we cannot convince ourselves that our behavior is correct when our conscience tells us otherwise.

In the words of Christ regarding the "indestructible worm" Mark reads:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:48.

Sin will destroy your conscience. The human conscience is the witness that God has put in every man, woman and child as to His Law written in their hearts. Rom. 2:15; it convicts you of sin when you commit it John 8:9. Whenever you sin against your conscience you defile it Titus 1:15. You can defile it so much that you burn it out to where it is no longer reliable; the Bible talks about having your "conscience seared with a hot iron" 1 Tim. 4:2. You can even get to the point where your conscience turns evil Heb. 10:22. At that point, you will consider good to be evil and evil to be good Isa. 5:20. After a while you will think it is sinful to go to church or read a Bible but it is perfectly okay to smoke, drink, and run around on your wife. That's exactly where we are today in America.

It would be a Godsend if the Church would suffer persecution today; we need a return to 1st Century living and persecution! She has grown rich and is falling behind! She has lost her first love. The church is ever drifting backward! Our churches are filled with people with no CONSCIENCE! No one seems to have a conscience anymore? I believe it is a fact generally admitted that there is much less conscience manifested, by men and women, in nearly all walks of life, especially in our churches, than there was fifty years ago. There is justly much complaint of this, and there seems to be but little prospect of any change. The crooks, frauds and evil in high and low places, among all ranks of men, are most alarming, and one is almost compelled to ask: "Can nobody be safely trusted anymore?" Now, what is the cause of this degeneracy? Doubtless there are many causes that contribute more or less directly to it; but I am persuaded that the fault is more in the pulpit and public press, the media than in any and all things else. It has been fashionable now for many years to ridicule and run down the Bible. Pastors have ceased, in a great measure, to probe the consciences of men with the Word of God. So far as my knowledge goes, there has been a great letting down and ignoring of the searching claims of God's Holy Spirit, as revealed in His Word. God's Word is the only standard of true morality. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The Word is the quickening of the human conscience. Just in proportion as the Bible the Word of God is kept out of view will there be manifest a loss of conscience. This must be the inevitable result. Let preachers ridicule the Book, attempts to preach the Gospel without thoroughly probing the conscience with the divine Word, and this must result in, at least, a partial paralysis of the moral sense. The error that lies at the foundation of this loss of individual and public conscience originates, no doubt, in the pulpits of America. The proper guardians of the public conscience have, I fear, very much neglected to expound and

insist upon obedience to the Word of God. It is plain that some of our most popular preachers today are mindless when it comes to the real need of man. They preach as if men have no free will. Hence, it has no moral agency, no moral law and moral obligation in any proper sense of these terms. A consistent mindless, or should I say Spirit-less preacher can have no proper idea of the moral obligation, of the moral guilt, the blameworthiness, and the restitution required. That word "restitution" you don't hear used anymore in our pulpits. Some years ago, a brother preacher heard me preach on the text "Be ye reconciled to God." I wanted to show, among other things, that being reconciled to God implied being reconciled to the Word of God. He called on me the next morning, and among other things said that neither he nor two of his brothers, whom he named, both preachers, had any conscience. "We have," said he, "no such idea in our minds of sin, guilt, justice and restitution as you have." "We cannot preach as you do on those subjects." He continued: "I am striving to cultivate a conscience, and think I begin to understand what it is." "But naturally neither I nor the two brothers I have named have any conscience." Shocking, scary to think we've lost our conscience, no conscience!

What a picture of the masses in our churches today! I have been struck with the manifest lack of CONSCIENCE in the typical sermons being preached in our churches today. Preachers, in their messages preach as if man has no free will, no moral agency, and nothing that is really logical as the result of free will and moral agency. They can ridicule the Word of God and the great doctrines of the faith; and indeed, their whole teaching, so far as I can see, is most shamefully showing their want of moral discrimination. I should be able to judge from his speech and sermons what the true ideas of moral depravity, and guilt are but their minds are blank when it comes to sin, guilt and its consequences. I guess these things are necessarily excluded by his philosophy. I do not know how extensively how these men have had their minds poisoned as preachers but I have observed with pain that many pastors who preach for "public opinion" fail to reach the consciences of their congregants. They fail to get to the bottom of the matter and insist upon obedience to the moral law of God alone as acceptable to God. They seem to me to "make void faith through man's goodness." They seem to hold up a different standard from that which is in Christ's "Sermon on the Mount," being Kingdom laws which were Christ's exposition of His moral law. Christ expressly taught in that sermon that there was no salvation without conformity to the rule of life laid down in that sermon. True faith in Christ will always and inevitably beget a holy life. But I fear it has become fashionable to preach what amounts to an antinomian gospel. The rule of life promulgated in the Gospel is precisely that of obedience. These four things are expressly affirmed of true faith, of the faith of the Gospel:

First, it establishes the Word of God as the authority. Second, it works by love. Third, it purifies the heart. And lastly, it overcomes the world. That is precisely what happens when Jesus Christ is received into a person's heart when they get saved.

These are but different forms of affirming that true faith does, as a matter of fact, produce a holy life. If it did not, it would "make void the Word of God." The true Gospel is not preached where obedience to the moral law as the only rule of life is not insisted upon. Wherever there is a failure to do this in the teaching of any pulpit it will inevitably be seen that the hearers of such a mutilated Gospel will have very little conscience. We need more "sons of thunder" in the pulpit. We need men that will preach forth the Word of God like enraged lightning and arouse the consciences of men. We need more Bible preached in the pulpit. To be sure, some of the Baptist

was extremists. But still under their teaching there was a very different state of the individual and public conscience from what exists in these days. Those old, stern, grand vindicators of the government of God would have thundered and lightened till they had almost demolished their pulpits if any such immoralities had shown themselves under their instructions as are common in these days. In a great measure the press takes its tone from the pulpit. The universal literature of the present day shows conclusively that the moral sense of the people needs toning up, and some of our most fascinating preachers have become the favorites of infidels, skeptics of every grade, Universalists, and the most abandoned characters. And has the offense of the Cross ceased, or is the Cross kept out of view? Has the holy Word of God, with its stringent precept and its awful penalty become popular with unconverted men and women? Or is it ignored in the pulpit, and the preacher praised for that neglect of duty for which he should be despised? I believe the only possible way to stop this downward tendency in private and public morals is the holding up from the pulpits in this land, with unsparing faithfulness, the whole Gospel of God, including as the only rule of life the perfect and holy Word of God.

The holding up of the Word of God rightly divided will reveal the total depravity of the heart, and the holding forth of the blood of Jesus Christ will make the heart pure in God's council. My brothers in the pulpits of this land, is there not a great want in the public of repetitive teaching from the pulpit upon this subject? We are set for the defense of the blessed Gospel and for the vindication of the Word of God. I pray you let us probe the consciences of our hearers, let us thunder forth God's Word and the Gospel of the grace of God until our voices reach the capital of this nation, through our representatives in Congress. It is now very common for the secular news media and news papers even to publish extracts of sermons. Let us give the reporters of the press such work to do as will make their ears and the ears of their readers burn. Let our railroads ring, our stock market hear, our officials of every grade hear from our pulpits, if they come within the sound, such wholesome preaching as will arouse them to better thoughts and a better life. Away with this milk-and-toast preaching of a love for Christ that has no holiness or moral discrimination in it. **False preachers are preaching a love of God that is not angry with sin and sinners every day.** Away with preaching a Christ not crucified for sin!

Christ crucified for the sins of the world is the Christ that the people need. Let us rid ourselves of the just assertion, that of neglecting to preach the whole Word of God until the consciences of men are asleep. Such a collapse of conscience in this land could never have existed if the Anger of God's building block in our preaching had not in great measure fallen out.

Some years ago I was preaching in a church whose pastor had resigned some months before. He seemed to have been almost overwhelmingly popular with his church and with the community. His church seemed to have almost idolized him. Everybody was speaking in his praise and holding him up as an example; and yet both the church and the community clearly demonstrated that they had had an unfaithful minister, a man who loved and sought the applause of his people. I heard so much of his repeated doctrine and saw so much of the legitimate fruits of his teachings that I felt constrained to tell the people from the pulpit that they had had an unfaithful minister; that such fruits as were apparent on every side, both within and without the church, could never have resulted from a faithful preacher of the Gospel. A church without a conscience! This assertion would, doubtless, have greatly shocked them had it been made under other circumstances; but, as the way had been prepared; they did not seem disposed to argue with it.

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of SIN, and of RIGHTEOUSNESS, and of JUDGMENT: Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”
John 15:8-11

Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in the Bible, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it. Let us not ignore this fact, my dear brothers; but let us lay it to heart, and be thoroughly awake to our responsibility in respect to the well being of this nation and the conscience of its people.

“He that saith unto the wicked, Thou are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.” Proverbs 24:24-25,

“He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping.”

“Conscience is soft whispers of God in man. Do not treat your conscience with contempt, for it always advises you to do what is best. It sets before you the will of God; it frees you from the secret defilements of the heart; and when you depart this life it grants you the gift of intimacy with God.”

AMERICA, A NATION WITHOUT A CONSCIENCE