

## QUESTION: What is our conscience?

**ANSWER:** Every person, saved or unsaved, has a conscience that gives them a knowledge of right and wrong, and produces guilt when violated. It is a built-in warning system from God, but it can become desensitized. When a person violates his conscience enough times, it eventually becomes scarred, or seared (I Timothy 4:2) and that person no longer feels any guilt. Those described in Ephesians 4:19, "Who **being past FEELING**, have given themselves over to licentiousness (no moral restraint), to work all uncleanness with greediness," are people who no longer feel their conscience, and they have no remorse (feeling sorry) for doing wrong.

- **I Timothy 4:1-2** "...some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, **having their own conscience SEARED** with a hot iron."
- **John 8:8-9** "And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, **being CONVICTED by their CONSCIENCE**, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."
- **Titus 1:15** "To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even **their MIND and CONSCIENCE are DEFILED.**"
- **Hebrews 9:14** "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge (cleanse) **your conscience** from DEAD works to serve the living God?"

**DEAD WORKS** are **religious works** or **good deeds** done in the **power of the flesh**, and a person who is operating in their FLESH, and not in FAITH and the power of the Holy Spirit, **CANNOT** do ANYTHING that will be pleasing to God (Rom. 8:8). Before we are born again by faith in Jesus Christ, we are all DEAD in our sins, and all our works are DEAD works. This is why there is no salvation apart from Jesus Christ, because it is NOT the keeping of laws, commandments, rules, ordinances, or ANY OUTWARD CONDUCT that makes a person RIGHTEOUS. There must be **an INWARD CHANGE, a NEW BIRTH, a CREATION by GOD** of a completely NEW PERSON, for someone to be a part of His Kingdom (John 3:3, Ephesians 2:4-5 & 8-9).

I believe the conscience of an unsaved person is the last vestige of his or her being made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Man was originally created in the image of God, and even though that image is now warped and damaged by sin, we still have **an instinctive knowledge of the true God**, and of right and wrong ("His law written in our hearts", Romans 2:15). There is **still some knowledge LEFT** of His law, from a time when all people knew God. Approximately 4,400 years ago, when the flood waters abated from the worldwide flood, Noah and his three sons and their wives repopulated the earth. At that time, everyone knew how to worship the true and living God, and knew His laws. Over the years, various people groups descended from Noah and his sons, scattered all over the earth, and eventually forgot about God, or deliberately turned their backs on Him. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says that **He has SET ETERNITY in the HEARTS of men**, which means we all have a yearning for some kind of god to worship, and a knowledge of an afterlife.

- **Romans 2:11-16** "For there is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without Law will also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned IN the Law, will be judged BY the Law; (For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified. For when Gentiles, who do not have the Law, **by nature do the things** contained in the Law, these, although not having the Law, are a law to themselves; who show **the work of the law WRITTEN in their HEARTS, their CONSCIENCE** also bearing witness, and between themselves their

thoughts accusing or else excusing them), In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."

For the Christian, the Bible seems to indicate that our conscience is now working together with the Holy Spirit speaking to us.

- **Romans 9:1** "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, **my CONSCIENCE** also bearing me witness **in the Holy Spirit.**"