

Spiritual How-to's
How to please the Lord
Do What is Right
Debbie Chaney

Intro. Story – Four Smart Students

I love this illustration because it teaches us about doing right, by showing us wrong.

I can only imagine the possible answers... they each will choose what they think is right – only all will be wrong. Right?

It also reminds me of what Judges 21:25 says, “in those days... everyone did what was right in their own eyes. The Message says, “everyone did whatever they felt like doing.”

Today's topic, is doing what is right. We please the Lord by doing what is right.

I. 1 Peter 2:15 = “For it is God’s will for you to silence the ignorance of foolish people, by doing what is right.” TPT

A. The foolish people in this context are human institutions, emperors & governors!

They are put in their positions for two reasons, God says:

1. To punish those who do evil 1 Pet. 2:14
2. To praise those who do good 1 Pet. 2:14

B. So, it is into this situation, that Peter speaks, by divine inspiration what God’s will is.

1. It is God’s will that YOU, (and me)
2. will show others what is right by doing what is right & good, and which profits others,
 - a. Mat. 5:16 – that they may see your good works
3. THAT will silence, or muzzle
4. the stupid, egotistical, without reason leaders & institutions
5. 1-4 are Greek word meanings, not mine.

C. Peter’s situation and the Judges verse all sound very much like the world today.

1. People are doing whatever is right in their own eyes
2. Leaders who are s’pose to be doing certain things are not
 - punishing evildoers
 - praising those doing good will
3. And we are being challenged to live what is right, regardless of what others are doing

D. God, just like the opening college dean, isn’t asking us to collaborate on an agreeable excuse, He is asking us to do what is right.

II. Let me give you some biblical context for doing what is right.

A. Gen. 4:7 – if you do what is right, will you not be accepted?

- B. Jas. 4:17 – so whoever knows the right thing to do , and fails to do it, for him it is sin
- C. Jas. 2:8 – if you love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing right
- D. Deut. 6:18 – do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord
- E. 2 Chron. 25:2 – he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a whole heart
- F. Amos 3:10 – they do not know how to do right, says the Lord
- G. Prov. 21:1 – every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart
- H. Prov. 14:12; 16:25 – there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end is the ways Of death
- I. It is overwhelmingly clear, that the Lord expects us to do what is right.
 - a. The question then becomes, who determines what is right?
 - b. It's a free for all if every man does what he thinks is right.... Right?
 - c. and that's what we have right now... a free for all

III. Here's where your **conscience comes in, so let's talk about your conscience.**

- A. **Webster defines** conscience as- “the sense of consciousness of moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions or character, together with a feeling or obligation to do right or be good. Conforming to what one considers to be correct or right, or morally good.”
- B. **Got Questions** says it is “part of the human psyche that induces mental anguish and guilt when we violate it and feelings of pleasure & well being when our actions, words & thoughts are in conformity to our value systems.”
- C. The OT concept of conscience, because of its community worldview, considered conscience the way in which a nation corporately related to God, not individuals.
- D. The NT concept of conscience involves these three truths-
 - a. it is the God given capacity for humans to exercise self-evaluation. Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Cor. 4:4
 - b. it is a witness to something Rom. 2:14-15; 2 Cor. 1:12; Rom. 9:1
 - c. conscience is a servant of your value system (weak conscience = weak value system)
- E. It seems apparent then, from these, that your **conscience is that “little voice”** within your head (soul/spirit) that speaks to you to validate or challenge your moral decisions to feel, think, act, live or be a certain way.
- F. **Our conscience is meant to be a trustworthy moral guide for us.**

III. But here's the rub. Here's where the problem arises.

- A. Our conscience is only **trustworthy if it is informed and ruled by God.** (His word)
 1. Conscience is to be **subordinate to the will of God** and His word
 2. When that is so, to willfully act against conscience is always a sin

- B. The NT is clear that our goal is to keep a clear conscience before God and man.
Acts 24:15; 1 Tim. 1:19; Tit. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:5-7; 1 Tim. 1:18-20
- C. God intends our conscience to be fueled by His word and then act as arbiter in our life's decisions and motivations.
 - 1. Apart from a godly-fed conscience, we have "every man doing what is right in their own eyes...."
 - 2. And living by what today is called "your truth".
 - 3. There is only ONE truth, it is Jesus. To believe anything else is a lie. Sorry.
John 14:6
 - 4. That's why the Proverbs so often tells us, "there is a way that SEEMS right..."
 - 5. We don't get to choose what seems right, God's word does.
- D. Another sobering fact about our **conscience is, it can be seared!**
"In the later times some will depart from the faith...through the insincerity of liars whose **consciences are seared.**" 1 Tim. 4:1-2
 - 1. This means their consciences are "rendered insensitive; cauterized with a hot iron. They have no more feeling."
 - 2. Our conscience can be rendered insensitive, or numb; just as a hot iron sears & deadens what it touches.
 - 3. Our conscience can be branded, marked dead to hearing the righteous call to morality.
- E. This happens when we choose to ignore the righteous prompting of that little voice. Each time we do, we are searing ourselves from being sensitive to God's voice. We are shutting down our God given conscience, our moral compass.
- F. In our world today, the vast majority of those we see and hear are living with a seared conscience. It is so sad. But it explains a lot.

IV. The good news.

- A. Science has proven that our brain adapts. And in fact, adapts to dishonesty. "The gradual escalation of self-serving dishonesty increases with repetition."
So "telling lies can sear your conscience." Seth Borenstein, AP Science writer
11.3.2016; Neil Garrett 2016
- B. If our brains adapt to repeated lies and our dishonesty increases with repetition...
What if we apply the truth to our brains, and increasingly repeat the truth in our actions and words? What if we barrage our brains with truth, righteousness, & God's standards? What outcomes would we expect? More of the same, right?
- C. What might our conscience be like, if fueled by God's righteous standard?
- D. Doing what is right is only possible if we live this way.
- E. In living this way, we are able to do what is right in the eyes of God and man.
- F. With such a one, God is well pleased.

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