

SHOULD YOUR CONSCIENCE BE YOUR GUIDE

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Romans 8:14, 16, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that, we are the children of God."

After you are born again the man on the inside, the inward man, has become a new man in Christ. We need to let this inward man be the dominate one, not the outward man. Present your bodies to God, a living sacrifice.

You see friends, that is not at all what we have thought many times. I think the reason that people have different ideas and concepts that they present is be-cause they don't understand the new birth thoroughly. Some people have thought that we were just justified. Thank God we are, but we are more than justified. We've become a new man--a new creature--in Christ.

This man on the inside, which is the spirit of man through whom God will deal with us, has become a new man. The old things that were in this old man, are gone now. Spiritual death was in there. The nature of the devil was in there. Hatred was in there. Lying was in there. But now the former things are re-placed by the love of God, the nature of God, the life of God.

On the inside we have a new nature. We've become a new man in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away. This is the man--this inward man, this new man--that is to be the dominate one. We are to listen to him, because it is through this man, through our spirit, that God will guide us.

This inward man has a voice. We call the voice conscience. Sometimes we call it intuition or guidance. If we haven't been taught

correctly, however, we will not be able to follow the inward voice. There is much discussion among church people whether or not the conscience of man is a safe guide. Well, let's put it this way: If your spirit has be-come a new man in Christ Jesus, then your conscience is a safe guide because your conscience is the voice of your spirit. It is by your conscience, or the voice of your spirit, that God guides you.

It is your spirit, not the Holy Spirit, that condemns you if you do wrong as a Christian. (Did you know that?) The Holy Spirit within doesn't convict of sin. Jesus plainly said that the only sin the Holy Spirit will convict the world of is the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ. It is your own spirit that knows the very moment that you have done wrong. The minute you miss it, you know it inside. If you don't know it then you are just not right with God, that's all there is to it.

It surprised me when I began to study what Paul said about his own conscience. I found out that Paul made some very illuminating statements concerning his own conscience; I discovered that Paul said he always obeyed his conscience. That changed my thinking along this line. Of course the spirits of those people outside Christ, who have never been born again would be unregenerate. With the nature of the devil in it they couldn't follow the voice of their spirit. Their conscience would permit them to do anything. Isn't that right? But when you have the nature and life of God in you, your conscience won't permit you to do or say just anything.

We need to be spirit-conscious. I want you to notice that in Romans 8, Paul said two things. First he said, "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Too many times people think that this witness he is talking about here is a physical something. It isn't at all. He does not say that the Spirit bears witness with our bodies. Feeling- is the voice of your body. Reason is the voice of your soul, or your mind. Your conscience is the voice of your spirit.

If you go by feelings, then you are going to be in trouble. How many times, when it comes to Christian experience, answers to prayer and so on, are we motivated by our feelings? So many times we hear,

"Well, I believe the Lord heard me-- I just feel like He did." I always know that those people are riding for a fall. What difference would it make whether you felt like it or you didn't? If the Word of God states it, it is true. If God said He heard and answered your prayer, then thank God He did. So base your faith on the Word, not on your feelings. This verse does not say that the Spirit bears witness with our bodies or with our feelings. No, it says, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirits."

Remember that the Word and the Spirit agree. The Spirit will take this Word and witness to your heart. Jesus said, "When the Spirit of truth is come...he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." He said to His disciples, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." He also said, "He will shew you things to come."

He bears witness with your spirit, and He leads you. The 14th verse says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The foremost way He leads us is by that inward witness. It is not for us to tell the Lord how to lead us. I know we can look into the Bible, and into Acts of the Apostles and we can see at times how some people received some guidance and direction from an angel who appeared to them and said certain things to them.

Too many times I'm afraid that we are seeking these manifestations instead of listening to what the Bible has to say. Visions didn't happen everyday in these people's lives. They happened a time or two in the entire lifetime of some. Too many times, all the time we are seeking guidance, that inward voice is trying to get our attention. God is trying to bear witness with our spirits. He is trying to get our attention, trying to tell us, trying to guide us; and we won't listen too many times because we are wanting something else.

Many times people will put out what they call a "fleece" before the Lord. I hear that on every hand, "I have a fleece out." I have told you before, I tried that one time, way back in 1941. I put a fleece out, I followed my fleece and I got "fleeced." That cured me. You never read anywhere in the New Testament where it says, "As many as are led by

fleeces, they are the sons of God." Of course the minute I say that someone says, "Well now, Gideon put out a fleece." Yes, I know Gideon did but just forgot about Gideon. You are not living in the day he lived in.

You are not living under the covenant Gideon lived under. Thank God we have a new covenant established on better promises. Of course we receive a lot of help from the Old Testament, but one thing that really hinders us many times in different areas of our Christian life is going back there, taking- something that doesn't apply to us and trying to make it apply. Many times we miss out on the real thing that God has for us.

I'm well satisfied that if we were to learn development, and learn to train and educate our spirits, in the process of time even in the minor incidents of life we would know inside with a "yes" or a "no" just what to do. We spend practically our entire lifetime in the mental realm and in the physical realm. We've developed our heads a lot of times at the expense of our hearts, in other words, the knowledge of our intellects has taken the throne of our lives and our spirits which should guide us are kept locked away in prison, so to speak, or shut up and not permitted to function. That inward voice is seeking to give guidance to our minds.

We all know that if we had listened to that inward voice there are a thousand and one things we would never have done. If we had listened to an inward voice, many times when we've invested and lost money would not have taken place. If we had listened to an inward voice we would never have chosen certain persons as our companions. I'm not just talking about marriage, but also about certain people with whom we get involved.

I know of several cases, much like that. I'm thinking of one just now that took place years ago when money was money. \$20,000 doesn't sound very big to us today, but going back into depression days \$20,000 was a fortune. I remember back in those days a dear Spirit-filled man went in with another fellow with \$20,000—it would be like \$200,000 today. He lost \$15,000 in that deal for the simple reason that

he just simply couldn't follow the practices that the other man was carrying on.

This man said to me, "If I had listened to an inward voice, I wouldn't have done that. I see that now." Well, if that be true, if God does lead us by this inward witness and inward voice, then we need to know it. We will avert a lot of mistakes that we may have made.