

The background of the slide is a photograph of trees in bloom. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The trees in the foreground and middle ground have yellow and pink blossoms, suggesting a spring setting. The trees are silhouetted against the sky, and their branches are visible. The overall scene is bright and colorful.

# **Bad or Corrupted Consciences**

**A Teaching Outline**

**Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger**

## **Bad Consciences**

### **Titus 1:15-16**

To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

Some people see good all around them, while others see nothing but evil. What is the difference? Our souls become filters through which we perceive goodness or evil. The pure (those who have Christ in control of their lives) learn to see goodness and purity even in this evil world.

But corrupt and unbelieving people find evil in everything because their evil minds and hearts color even the good they see and hear. Whatever you choose to fill your mind with will affect the way you think and act. Turn your thoughts to God and his Word, and you will discover more and more goodness, even in this evil world. A mind filled with good has little room for what is evil (see Philippians 4:8).

Many people claim to know God. How can we know if they really do? We will not know for certain in this life, but a glance at their lifestyles will quickly tell us what they value and whether they have ordered their lives around Kingdom priorities. Our conduct speaks volumes about what we believe (see 1 John 2:4-6). What do people know about God and about your faith by watching your life?

### **Man's heart was only evil continually.**

### **Genesis 6:5**

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

God was expressing sorrow for what the people had done to themselves, as a parent might express sorrow over a rebellious child. God was sorry that the people chose sin and death instead of a relationship with him. The people's sin grieved God. Our sins break God's heart as much as sin did in Noah's day. Noah, however,

pleased God, although he was far from perfect. We can follow Noah's example and find "favor with the LORD" in spite of the sin that surrounds us.

**With full knowledge, he lied to the Holy Spirit.**

**Acts 5:2**

And kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

We see both internal and external problems facing the early church. Inside, the church had dishonesty (5:1-11), greed (5:3), and administrative headaches (6:1-7).

Outside, the church was being pressured by persecution. While church leaders were careful and sensitive in dealing with the internal problems, they could not do much to prevent the external pressures. Through it all, the leaders kept their focus on what was most important—spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**With stubbornness and unrepentant heart, wrath is stored up.**

**Romans 2:5**

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

Although God does not usually punish us immediately for sin, his eventual judgment is certain. We don't know exactly when it will happen, but we know that no one will escape that final encounter with the Creator.

**They gave themselves over to sensuality, impurity and greed.**

**Ephesians 4:19**

And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

People should be able to see a difference between Christians and non-Christians because of the way Christians live. We are to live full of light (5:8). Paul told the

Ephesians to leave behind the old life of sin, since they were followers of Christ. Living the Christian life is a process.

Although we have a new nature, we don't automatically think all good thoughts and express all right attitudes when we become new people in Christ. But if we keep listening to God, we will be changing all the time. As you look back over last year, do you see a process of change for the better in your thoughts, attitudes, and actions? Although change may be slow, it comes as you trust God to change you.

### **Some have not kept faith resulting shipwreck of faith.**

#### **1 Timothy 1:19**

Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

How can you keep your conscience clear? Treasure your faith in Christ more than anything else and do what you know is right. Each time you deliberately ignore your conscience, you are hardening your heart. Over a period of time your capacity to tell right from wrong will diminish.

As you walk with God, he will speak to you through your conscience, letting you know the difference between right and wrong. Be sure to act on those inner tugs so that you do what is right—then your conscience will remain clear.

### **Some have seared their conscience.**

#### **1 Timothy 4:2**

By means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron.

Paul said the false teachers were hypocrites and liars who encouraged people to follow "deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons." The danger that Timothy faced in Ephesus seems to have come from certain people in the church

who were following some Greek philosophers who taught that the body was evil and that only the soul mattered.

The false teachers refused to believe that the God of creation was good, because his very contact with the physical world would have soiled him.

Though these Greek-influenced church members honored Jesus, they could not believe he was truly human. Paul knew that their teachings, if left unchecked, would greatly distort Christian truth.

Satan deceives people by offering a clever imitation of the real thing. The false teachers gave stringent rules (such as forbidding people to marry or to eat certain foods).

This made them appear self-disciplined and righteous. Their strict disciplines for the body, however, could not remove sin (see Colossians 2:20-23). We must not be unduly impressed by a teacher's style or credentials; we must look to his teaching about Jesus Christ. His conclusions about Christ show the source of his message.

## **Corrupted Consciences**

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they value and whether they have ordered their lives around Kingdom priorities. Our conduct speaks volumes about what we believe (see 1 John 2:4-6).

### **Pharaoh's heart was stubborn.**

#### **Exodus 7:14**

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go.

God performed a miracle by turning Aaron's staff into a serpent, and Pharaoh's magicians did the same through trickery or sorcery. Although miracles can help us believe, it is dangerous to rely on them alone. Satan can imitate some parts of God's work and lead people astray.

Pharaoh focused on the miracle rather than the message. We can avoid this error by letting the Word of God be the basis of our faith. No miracle from God would endorse any message that is contrary to the teachings of his Word.

### **Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not listen.**

#### **Exodus 8:15**

But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

After repeated warnings, Pharaoh still refused to obey God. He hardened his heart every time there was a break in the plagues. His stubborn disobedience brought suffering upon himself and his entire country. While persistence is good, stubbornness is usually self-centered. Stubbornness toward God amounts to rebellion against him. Rebellion will not only bring you grief, but it also may affect those who stand with you.

## **They were not ashamed of their abominations.**

### **Jeremiah 6:15**

"Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; they did not even know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be cast down," says the LORD.

The right path for living is "the old, godly way" and has been marked out by God. But the people refused to take God's path, going their own way instead. We face the same decision today—going God's old but true way, or following a new path of our own choosing. Don't be misled. The only way to find peace and "rest for your souls" is to walk on God's path.

## **The heart is more deceitful than all else.**

### **Jeremiah 17:9**

"The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"

clined toward sin from the time we are born. It is easy to fall into the routine of forgetting and forsaking God. But we can still choose whether or not to continue in sin. We can yield to a specific temptation, or we can ask God to help us resist temptation when it comes.

The person who becomes rich by unjust means will end up foolish and poor. Whether at work, school, or play, we should strive to be honest in all our dealings. Getting a promotion, passing an exam, or gaining prestige by dishonest means will never bring God's blessing or lasting happiness.

**An invitation is given to open your heart's door.**

**Rev. 3:20**

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print