

Conscience

Chrysostom said that conscience and nature are two books in which the human mind can read of God previous to supernatural revelation. The conscience is like a flashing light on a highway. We may ignore it, or we may get mad at it, but those who pay no attention to it will often pay severe consequences.

No one doubts that a flashing light had a designer. The conscience is our flashing light – our warning device. If God did not give it to us, where did it come from?

The conscience is the mind acting as a judge. It is “what feels bad when everything else feels so good.” A dieter who yields to temptation and gobbles a cake knows this feeling. So do sinners.

Some people think a good moral man can simply follow his conscience and be saved. Paul could say to his Jewish family, “...*I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day*” (Acts 23:1). Though his conscience was his guide, a mind can judge only what it has learned. Paul’s unenlightened conscience moved him to persecute Christians. In fact, his conscience would have hurt if he had *not* tried to destroy the Lord’s people. “*Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities*” Acts 26:9-11.

A good conscience is no guarantee against eternal condemnation. “*For I know nothing against myself; yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 4:4). Paul knew that “good conscience” and “chief of sinners” once lived in the same man. They still can. –Rick Duggin