

The Joy of a Clean Conscience – Class #6

Adult Equipping – June 13th, 2021

Overview

1. What is the conscience and why is it important?
2. How does the gospel allow me to live with a clean conscience before God?
3. How do I tune or calibrate my conscience?
4. How does Scripture help me to navigate differences of opinion in regard to matters of conscience?

Review & Reflection:

- Has anyone been applying what we learned two weeks ago to a specific issue?
- Table of 1 Cor. 8-10

	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Weak</i>	<i>Weak</i>
<i>Meat Sacrif. to Idols</i>	<i>Licentious</i>	<i>Confidence to Eat Meat</i>	<i>Lack confidence to Eat Meat</i>	<i>Legalistic</i>
<i>Background</i>		<i>Mostly Gentile</i>	<i>Mostly Jewish</i>	
<i>Reasoning</i>	<i>Pagan parties</i>	<i>Freedom to eat what I want</i>	<i>Sinful to eat meat</i>	<i>OT Dietary Restriction</i>
<i>Temptation</i>	<i>Heresy</i>	<i>Arrogance</i>	<i>Judgmentalism</i>	<i>Heresy</i>
<i>Gospel Distortion</i>	<i>Lawless Subtraction</i>			<i>Legalistic Addition</i>

How does Scripture help me to navigate differences of opinion in regard to matters of conscience?

Theological Triage

- 1 - Essential to the gospel
- 2 - Urgent for the health and practice of the church
- 3 - Important to theology but not important enough for separation
- 4 - Unimportant to gospel witness or ministry.

Listening

Romans 14:1-15:7

14:1-12

14:13-23

15:1-7

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Strong</i>	<i>Weak</i>	<i>Weak</i>	<i>Weak</i>
<i>Licentious</i>	<i>Confident to Eat Meat</i>	<i>Fully persuaded yet welcoming, not looking down on the weak</i>	<i>Flexible in disputable matters to edify others and advance gospel</i>	<i>Fully persuaded yet welcoming rather than judging those who are strong</i>	<i>Lack confidence to Eat Meat</i>	<i>Legalistic</i>
<i>Eats Meat</i>	<i>Eats Meat</i>	<i>Eats Meat</i>	<i>Flexible</i>	<i>Won't eat meat</i>	<i>Won't eat meat</i>	<i>Won't eat meat</i>

<i>I have freedom not only to eat meat but to go to idol parties</i>	<i>Freedom to eat what I want, those who don't are uneducated and wrong</i>	<i>Freedom to eat what I want, but I welcome those who disagree.</i>	<i>I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some</i>	<i>I abstain from eating meat for the glory of God, but I welcome those who disagree.</i>	<i>It's sinful to eat meat, and Christians who do so are being unfaithful to God.</i>	<i>You must follow the OT dietary restriction practices if you want to be a Christian.</i>
<i>Heresy</i>	<i>Arrogance</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Judgmentalism</i>	<i>Heresy</i>
<i>Distorts gospel by lawless subtraction</i>	<i>Diminishes the Gospel</i>	<i>Reveals the Gospel</i>	<i>Magnifies the Gospel</i>	<i>Reveals the Gospel</i>	<i>Diminishes the Gospel</i>	<i>Distorts gospel by legalistic addition</i>

**Adapted from Andy Naselli's book, Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ.*

Questions to ask ourselves in conscience conflicts:

1. How does Scripture speak to this issue?
2. What Scriptural priority, relevance and proportion does this issue have?
3. Have I listened humbly and carefully to: those I respect (alive and dead), the best explanation of both sides of the issue, those who I initially disagree with, and God in prayer on this issue?
4. Am I fully persuaded that it is right?
5. Which side would honor God and imitate Jesus most? Which side would advance the cause of the gospel the most?
6. Which side would help build others up and avoid tempting others to violate their consciences before God?

Reflection Questions:

1. *Consider one conscience conflict you have had with another Christian in your life. How would you have handled the situation differently knowing what you know now?*
2. *Why do you think that masking is such a divisive issue in our day?*
3. *How did Romans 14 add to your understanding of how to approach a conflict of conscience?*
4. *How are you tempted to distance yourself from those you disagree with? How could that change in the days ahead?*
5. *Why should God's treatment of the other person affect how we treat them?*
6. *What might you do to contribute to the unity of the church and to uproot seeds of division within it?*