

Sermon Discussion Guide:

# A Clear Mission and a Clean Conscience

Sunday, January 14, 2024

Scripture: **Acts 24:1-21**

Series: **The Spirit & The Church**

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## OVERVIEW

In today's passage, the apostle Paul is facing a legal trial before the Roman governor Felix, based on false charges brought about by the high priest Ananias and some Jewish elders. At the trial, Paul has an opportunity to defend his actions and his ministry, and he asserts that he always strives to have a clear conscience before God and man. Paul instructs believers that having a healthy conscience is essential to having a healthy faith and life. Yet our conscience must be cultivated and influenced by spiritual resources. As such, **a healthy conscience is reformed by the Spirit and informed by the Scriptures.**

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## CORROBORATING TEXTS

Romans 2:14-15; Romans 9:1; 2 Corinthians 1:12; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Timothy 1:18-19; 1 Corinthians 8:7-8; 1 Timothy 4:1-2; Hebrews 9:13-14; Hebrews 10:22; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2-3

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Prior to this week's sermon, how did you think about the conscience? How would you have defined what the conscience is and does?
2. Pastor Joe defined the conscience as, "*the internal instrument that testifies to our values and judges our actions.*" How does this definition help you understand the conscience from a biblical perspective?
3. How do you think this definition applies to unbelievers who don't have the Holy Spirit? Discuss passages such as John 16:8-11, Romans 2:14-15, and 1 Corinthians 2:13-14.
4. An unhealthy, neglected faith contributes to having a bad conscience. What are some ways this can happen? What are some ways we can mitigate this from happening?
5. We experience a guilty conscience when we are convicted of our actions. Our conscience cries foul when we sin, and points out our failure. How can we tell the difference between conviction by our conscience and conviction by the Holy Spirit? Is there a difference?
6. Based on this sermon, how would you describe a weak conscience? Describe a biblical example of having a weak conscience. What are some modern examples in our own culture where Christians might display a weak conscience?
7. How is a healthy conscience reformed by the Spirit and informed by the Scriptures? What are the benefits of having a healthy conscience? [*freedom from false teachers and doctrines; conviction by confession and repentance; joy and peace by the fruit of the gospel received*]