

# The War within the Soul

- There will always be a tensions, battles, disagreements within the soul.
- *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from **fleshly lusts which war against the soul**, 1Pet 2:11*
- *For **the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh**; and these are **contrary\*** to one another, so that **you do not do the things that you wish**. Gal 5:17*
- ***\* adversary ... set opposed to one another.***
- *And when He said these things, all His **adversaries** were put to shame; Lk. 13:17*
- Our fleshly body and the soul within are enemies.

# The War within the Soul/Mind

- For we know that **the law is spiritual**, but **I am of the flesh**, sold under sin. 15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For **what I will to do**, that **I do not practice**; but **what I hate, that I do**. Rom. 7:14-15
- I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For **I delight in the law of God according to the inward man**. 23 But I see **another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members**. 25 So then, **with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin**. Rom 7:21-25

# You do not do the things you Want

- *these are **contrary\*** to one another, so that **you do not do the things that you wish.** Gal. 5:17*
- Two opponents within. Fleshly body/desires vs our eternal spirit/soul that will live on after flesh is gone.
- The battle begins with temptation.
- *each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lusts and enticed. James 1:14-15*
- Our allies in the battle: *Weapons of war 2Cor.10:3-4*
- God's word. Jesus used effectively. Mt. 4:1-11
- Our Conscience – God's gift – Our ally in warfare.

# The Conscience: Our Ally

- The moment lust / enticement bring temptation.
- Flesh frames the argument ... the conscience answers.
- Our conscience knows when the flesh begins the war.
- It seeks to keep us from giving in to temptation.
- It warns, advises, accuses, fights against.
- The more of God's word is in our mind, the more tools we give to our conscience to fight.
- If flesh overwhelms spirit and conscience ...
- There is guilt, godly sorrow, remorse and disgust.
- The conscience ... still our ally seeks repentance.

# How the Conscience Works

- The conscience works with the Law / our spirit
- *in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, **their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing** Rom 2:15*
- The conscience bears witness with the Law
- It accuses the flesh and excuses the soul
- It assesses our thoughts, actions and deeds based on our knowledge of the law of Christ.
- Accuses when we seek to or have done wrong
- Excuses when we seek or have done right.

# Paul's Conscience Bore Witness

- *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, Rom 9:1*
- Paul says it with his mind.
- I am NOT lying.
- his conscience bears witness this is true.
- Thus there are two voices.
- The mind justifying, excusing, accusing using the law of Christ
- The conscience bearing witness and even sometimes overruling our mind based again on the Scriptures.

# Paul knew he was Chief of Sinners

- *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 1 Tim 1:15-16*
- *I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 1 Tim 1:12-14*
- *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, Eph 3:8*

# Yet Paul had a Good Conscience

- *And Paul, looking steadfastly on the council, said, Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day. Acts 23:1*
- *Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always. Acts 24:16*
- *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day 2 Tim 1:3*
- We need to understand how Paul could have a good conscience through all these things so we can know that we too have a good conscience.



# A Good Conscience Lives in Present

- Paul could not change his past.
- None of us can.
- There are things in our past that make us cringe, groan, moan and anguish over.
- But with baptism ... A good conscience.
- I can't change it, but God can.

# A Good Conscience

- *There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but **the answer of a good conscience toward God**), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet 3:21*
- *And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and **wash away your sins**, Acts 22:16*
- Paul's faith in God's power to forgive gave him that good conscience.
- Our faith in God's power to forgive must give us a good conscience.
- The conscience works with God's word. The better we understand God's word the stronger the ally the conscience.
- In order to work properly the mind must be educated

# A Good Conscience

- A conscience lives in the present moment.
- Trusts God to cleanse and remove the past
- Although we feel remorse and contrition, we trust God removed it. Conscience is good.
- When we sin ... Conscience starts working... it is a good conscience because it is still doing what God designed it to do.
- When it leads us to immediate repentance it is still good because it is still doing exactly what God designed it to do.

# Are we Missing Something?

- We don't have to be sinless and perfect to have a good conscience.
- We must educate our mind to this fact.
- Our conscience can be wounded yet remain good.
- *However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and **their conscience, being weak, is defiled.** 10 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and **wound their weak conscience,** you sin against Christ. 1 Cor 8:8, 10*
- That weak and wounded conscience can remain good if the mind is educated to the truth that repentance and confession cleanses the conscience

# Cleansing our Conscience

- *how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?** Heb 9:14-15*
- So the answers are clear.
- A good conscience will still hurt when we do wrong.
- It can be wounded and even defiled yet be cleansed either with baptism or with repentance and confession
- To keep our conscience clean, we must live in the present moment and always strive to have a good conscience.

# Never Forget

- *When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. 14 Again, when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, 15 if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 16 None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live. Ezek 33:13-16*
- The present moment is all that counts.