
A Clean Conscience

1 Timothy 1:5-7

“You owe me!”

Standing with your two kids at an amusement park, you make the next turn in a snake-like line and find yourself face-to-face with your past—a neighbor from whom you once borrowed \$200 when the transmission on your car gave out. When you were 19 and were ready to take on the world with no money or job, he had helped you. Shoveling his snow and hauling his trash were your exchanges for jumpstarts and fixed tires. Kind enough to make a loan, he understood your hard times, and you made a vow to repay.

Normally your folks would have supervised your follow-through on that commitment, but they weren't even together anymore, and this was the last thing on their mind. And so, eventually you forgot about that debt. The thought of it had surfaced a few times, but you had always pushed it back with the rationalization that you didn't even know this man's phone number.

You avoid the neighbor's glance and look down, but you are sure that his eyes are fixed on you, and you really don't know what to do or say.

No matter how much we may try to keep the past buried, the Lord inevitably brings to light the issues in our lives that we haven't been willing to face. Unresolved sin is a huge weight on our lives. Although we confess our sins to God, if we've offended someone, we must make restitution in order to experience a true clear conscience and to enjoy God's fullest blessing. Although God's forgiveness awaits us if we ask, we must not assume people we've wronged have forgiven us. We must ask!

Accountability and Application

Having a clean conscience before God and man is an absolute requirement for personal holiness. Here's what you can do:

- Slip away for some uninterrupted time.
- Ask the Lord to reveal specific sins or problems that are still unresolved.
- Write down every person and situation that comes to mind.
- Put a #1 next to the most difficult to handle, then a #2, and so on.
- Commit to the Lord that you will work at resolving these, starting with #1.
- Call a close friend and tell him what you've decided.

Prayer: *Lord, I realize that even though you have forgiven me, there are issues and offenses that I have against other men and women that I am responsible to bring to resolution. I don't have the strength to do this on my own. I need your help.*

1 Timothy 1:5-7

Warning Against False Teachers

³ As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. ⁵**The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.** ⁶**Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion,** ⁷**desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.**

⁸Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.