

A Clear Conscience

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Hebrews 9.

B. The problem addressed in this passage is how to clear the conscience of dead works.

II. We all possess a conscience.

A. It is that which urges us towards our moral standard whatever it is.

B. It is not a good guide in and of itself.

C. It can be a prod and a punishment.

D. The conscience problem here has to do with the bad motive of some religious activities—an attempt to placate God.

III. There was a place God authorized religious activity and God authorized regulations, but there were limitations to these.

A. These dealt only with the outward man if the person practicing looked at them this way. Ritual and ordinance has no value in itself.

B. The tabernacle has meaning for what it stood. Our activity does not stand for our acceptance before God. (Hebrews 10:6, Psalm 51)

1. Service is not to be a duty but a delight.

2. We are only loved by God because God is love.

3. Without a death, it is impossible to receive the benefits of a covenant, so explaining the need for Christ's death.

4. Blood was necessary for our salvation. It showed that there was nothing salvageable in our character and that Christ had to be our substitute. This was God's eloquent way of saying that there is nothing a man can do to please Him in and of himself.

5. The gospel is that He gave Himself to us to do a work in us.

6. We must accept the sentence of death on all that we are in order to receive the benefits of the covenant.

IV. The secret is that God works in you what is pleasing in His sight.

Application questions:

1. How is the conscience rightly cleaned?

2. What is the danger of religious ritual, and what is the true purpose of it?

3. What is the need for blood in salvation, and how does the tabernacle picture this need being met?
