

To Examine or Not to Examine

I. Introduction

- A. Paul states that he does not examine (ἀνακρίνω #350) himself (1st Cor. 4:3).
 - B. A man must examine (δοκιμάζω #1381) himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup (1st Cor. 11:28).
 - C. Every believer's final temporal-life examination will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
 - 1. It is not our place to sit in judicial review of any other believer, or even ourselves.
 - 2. We can (and ought to) perform continuous self-evaluations pertaining to spirituality (1st Cor. 11:28), and as a result we can function with a clear conscience (1st Cor. 4:4a).
 - 3. The clear conscience itself, however, is not necessarily an indication of how the Judgment Seat of Christ will go (1st Cor. 4:4b).
- P= It's good to have a clear conscience (1st Tim. 1:5), but the believer must continue to maintain humility and wait for the Judgment Seat of Christ for their final temporal life examination.

II. Development—the clear conscience. συνείδησις #4893: *conscience* (Acts 23:1; 24:16; Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 13:5; 1st Cor. 8:7,10,12; 10:25,27,28,29_{x2}; 2nd Cor. 1:12; 4:2; 5:11; 1st Tim. 1:5,19; 3:9; 4:2; 2nd Tim. 1:3; Tit. 1:15; Heb. 9:9,14; 10:2,22; 13:18; 1st Pet. 2:19; 3:16,21). σύνοιδα #4894: *to know; to be conscious of* (Acts 5:2; 1st Cor. 4:4).

- A. Unbelievers and legalistic believers can have a clear conscience (Acts 23:1; Rom. 2:15).
 - 1. This does not necessarily mean ultimate approval at the Judgment Seat of Christ, or the Great White Throne (1st Cor. 4:4a; Matt. 7:22).
 - 2. The weak conscience can be defiled (1st Cor. 8:7; Tit. 1:15), and even seared (1st Tim. 4:2).
- B. Conscience became the standard for Judgment in the Dispensation of Gentiles, following the Age of Innocence, and actually continued for the Gentiles in conjunction with times of ignorance (Acts 17:30,31; Rom. 2:15,16).
- C. Conscience is no longer the standard for Judgment for the church because so much more knowledge has been given to the Church (Lk. 12:47,48).
- D. The believer has the advantage of being able to compare his conscience's witness to the Holy Spirit's witness (Rom. 9:1).
- E. The Church Age believer has the advantage of receiving an absolutely cleansed conscience as a consequence of his salvation (Heb. 9:9,13; 10:2,22).