

Become A Christian Only!

- HEAR HIS WORD - ROM 10:17
- BELIEVE - JN 8:24; ROM 10:9
- REPENT OF SIN - ACTS 2:38; 3:19
- CONFESS CHRIST - ROM 10:9-10; ACTS 8:37
- REMOVE YOUR SINS IN BAPTISM – MK 16:16; ACTS 22:16; I PET 3:21

News and Comments:

- New book, “The Sin of Drinking,” is now out for sale – See our web-site for details

Useful Tips:

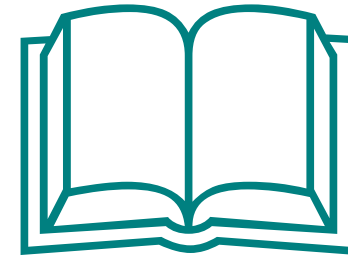
- **NEW** Internet Radio Station – www.live365.com/stations/drishell
- Our Web-Site – www.thehillcrestchurchofchrist.org
- Free e-mail based Bible Correspondence Course on-line
- Friends? Mail a copy or sign them up for the e-mail version

Service Times:

Sunday Morning Bible Study: 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship Services: 10:30 AM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study: 7:00 PM

The Workman Bulletin

II Timothy 2:15 - Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.



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Conscience Choice

Have you ever considered how we come to make the everyday choices of life? Most simply make choices without any thought at all. We live by the seat of our pants. Meaning, we just do whatever we want to do with no thought to either it being right or wrong or the consequences our actions brings.

Not knowing it's wrong; a three year old throws a ball at a glass window. When asked why the child replies, "I don't know." When the three year old learns it was wrong he reacts with sorrow and therefore is aware that it should never be done again. The point is that consciousness of right and wrong is essential in making choices. If we don't know or don't care what's right or wrong, we simply aren't making a conscious choice to do right.

In dealing in spiritual matters we must make a conscious choice to do right for us to have Heaven and find favor with God. Webster defines conscience as: "sense of right or wrong." The word itself is mentioned 31 times in the Bible all occurrences being found in the New Testament. Obvious from this is that God is concerned with the conscience of man.

Conscience and Salvation:

The salvation of man depends heavily upon the conscience. Clearly, by definition, having a conscience is a man who recognizes right and wrong and acts accordingly. We are told in the scripture that it is the conscience of man that is cleared of sin through baptism. (Hebrews 9:11-14; 10:22; I Peter 3:21) Generally, once one determines he/she is in sin his/her conscience is "pricked." (Convicted that one is in a sinful condition) The initial reaction is usually sorrow at this wrong. Mere sorrow, however, does not clear the conscience of man from sin before God. The scriptures we've noted clearly show that man's conscience is cleared by baptism. Consider Acts 2:37-41 - This example of men reacting to the knowledge that they are in a sinful condition leads them to accept the necessity of baptism as a cleansing of the sinful man. This is exactly the response all men need to have.

Conscience and Faithfulness:

Those who have initially cleared their conscience in baptism, according to the Hebrew writer must continue to have their conscience exercised to discern both good and evil. (Hebrews 5:12-14) This is the basis for all righteousness. If one does not study they can not know right and wrong and without knowing right and wrong one cannot make the conscious choices that will keep them faithful. In Romans 14:1-3 the apostle Paul gives us a good

picture of one not discerning right or wrong. This weak brother, probably a newer Christian, is confused to what the truth is on the matter. Eating meat to him is sin. The truth is eating meat is not a sin. However, he holds this position not knowing the scriptures. (The New Testament has not been written at this time.) Study is the obvious key to knowing right and wrong. Let's consider Paul's teaching to Timothy for example. (II Timothy 2:15) Timothy was told to "study to show thyself approved." He is approved by study of God's word. Sticking with the example of Timothy, he is admonished to "Hold faith and a good conscience." (I Timothy 1:19) How is he to do this? Looking in the second letter to Timothy he is:

- ◆ To keep the teachings of Paul. (II Timothy 1:13)
- ◆ To keep the teachings of his youth. (II Timothy 3:14-15)

These teachings that Timothy was to hold to are the scriptures. (II Timothy 3:16-17) This perfection knows right and wrong, which leads to the conscious choice of doing right.

What I Can Do:

What does it all mean? What choice does one face spiritually? If one has not been baptized they can do nothing and not become a Christian. If one has been baptized and is a Christian they can never or almost never study, they can never or almost never pray, they can never or almost never teach others, they can never or almost never fellowship with fellow Christians. However, one could let their conscience be "pricked" and be baptized and become a Christian. If already a Christian one could choose to continue to learn, grow and fulfill all spiritual obligations. Either way the ones who choose will reap their choices or as Paul states, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

THE CONSCIOUS CHOICE IS YOURS!