

## The Three Eternal Destinies #148 *The Good, the Bad, and the Holy, Part 1*

“A clean conscience is the best pillow” is how the old saying goes. That meant that man knows that when the conscience is obeyed inner peace prevails – even as Rom 2:14-15 declares. But not all choose to heed conscience – since all mankind since Adam knows the difference (they were made in God’s likeness). Even men like Adolf Hitler knew. He declared himself on a mission to liberate man from the degrading feelings, which he thought was an illusion or degrading chimera known as “the conscience.”

Hitler’s reign of terror provides mankind the knowledge of just how cruel men can be when they repudiate their own conscience and the consciences of others. We see today no less ruthlessness than Hitler in violent crime, rape, and murder without remorse. In increasing numbers those who commit such offenses are in their youth, even as Rom 1:30 and 2 Tim 3:2 foretold, speaking of children who are so dulled in conscience that they do not obey their own parents. 2 Tim 2:4 says that in the last days children will not obey their parents because somehow their consciences have been dulled as with a hot branding iron. 2 Tim 3:1 depicts these days.

While most people would never think of committing a violent crime, they nevertheless become “white-collar crooks” and as they have no qualms about engaging in sexual immorality, or lying, or cheating. Doctors and lawyers make their living by lying. Salesmen make their living by cheating, lying, and being deceptive. Theologians and pastors are those who are the greatest of all in deception (2 Cor 11:15).

The conscience either approves or condemns each man. The conscience is the God-like quality in every man by which each person determines his or her eternal destiny (1 Pet 3:16; 1 Tim 1:5).

Hitler’s conscience bothered him. Instead of not doing the things that produced guilt feelings, he tried to suppress it (Rom 1:18 - 2:16). Such were his feelings, ranging from simply uneasiness to agonizing pain. A stricken conscience can even cause depression or a deep sense of failure and illness. Hitler thought that his conscience was a burden or an enemy, and not a friend to him (Rom 1:28). Conscience is an innate, inborn faculty given directly by God Himself. It is God’s vice-regent. It is God’s substitute, His presence in man, or which represents Him.

He breathed His breath into man (Gen 2:7), which made his soul like God Himself. The conscience is not “an acquired faculty.” It is the voice of God in man. It is not a product solely of parental and societal conditioning, even though these things affect the conscience of any given person or child. Some psychologists say that a child learns to refrain from bad behavior simply or just or only because of the fear of punishment. They believe that what we call conscience is simply the absorption of parental values and beliefs. Others say that society itself shapes our values and behavior.

In every *good nation* there is a “conscience clause” and good people stand up to the social and political pressure that goes against God’s voice within them. The Ten Commandments is innate knowledge all over the world, despite the differences in cultures. That is, murder, lying, or bearing false witness, theft, adultery, and not honoring and obeying your parents – these make up (partly) *natural law*.

Gen 1:26 – Since man is made in God’s image (Gen 3:22), Gen 2:16-17 tells us that Adam and Eve knew better (Gen 3:5 and Rom 2:12-16).

By “nature” those who were not raised under the law or even knew the law as Christians followed the principles of God’s law not by social pressure but by “nature.” So conscience is not a burden for the righteous in Rev 22:11, but it is for the people of Rom 1:19,20,24,26,28. Conscience is God’s gift to the nations who are not God’s holy people and it is His way of disciplining the nations when they do wrong. But when properly heeded it rewards with eternal life after the first death of Heb 9:27 and the judgment of Rev 20:11-15. But Rev 21:8 are those who did not heed conscience.

The Good and the Bad and the Holy – all three are found in Rev 22:11 – from which the title “The Three Eternal Destinies of Man” was conceived by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. The Good, the Bad, and the Holy covers the whole of mankind, none is left out of these three categories designated in Rev 22:11. The first category is in two classifications: the unjust and the filthy. They are the Bad. The second category is the Righteous. They are the Good. And the third category is the Holy, and holy means set apart from all the others – in the Holy City of God. They are the wife of the Lamb (Rev 21:9-12). They are the Twelve Tribes of Israel now and in the

ages to come. The Twelve Tribes become the wife of the Lamb and all who make themselves ready in her (Rev 19:7-8 and Lk 1:17).