The King's Highway

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EDITORIAL

"Having a good conscience." I Peter 3:16.

One of the meanings that Webster gives for conscience is "The moral faculty, passing judgment on one's self." Someone has called conscience "The voice of God in the soul." It is not easy to define; but seems to be an inward principle which warns us against and condemns that which is wrong and approves that which is right in our life and action. Hence a God given faculty for our protection and instruction in moral and spiritual things.

struction in moral and spiritual things. According to the teaching of the scriptures, a man may possess either a good or an evil conscience. And I want to discuss just briefly. what is meant by a good, or an evil, conscience and how we may possess them. If it is, as it seems to be, a natural faculty sovereignly bestowed, then it is good and remains so as long as it like the needle on the compass remains under the control of the two magnetic poles, viz., the word of God and the Holy Spirit. And in that condition it will be safe for us to follow its dictates, and we often hear people say, "If I follow the dictates of my conscience I will be alright or my conscience does not condemn me so I am alright..' 'A good conscience will warn us and condemn us if we meditate or plan to do wrong or take a wrong step. I mean anything which is contrary to God's word and will. Shakespeare said, "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues, and every tongue brings in a several tale, and every tale condemns me for a villain." And that is as it should be if a man is living out of harmony with God's word. A good conscience is faithful in reproving us for any wrong thought, word or action, whether done intentionally or by mistake. Now let me ask, what constitutes an evil conscience? In reply I would say it is one which is unfaithful, I mean one which will let us think, speak or act contrary to or out of harmony with God's word and not reprove us or condemn us. The apostle speaks of those who speak lies in hypocrisy because they have their conscience seared with a hot iron. I Tim. 4:2. That is a conscience that is hardened and has lost that sensitive feeling. He also calls it a defiled conscience, Tit 1:15, one which is perverted and blinded and cannot judge correctly of its own action, it will sometimes excuse when it should accuse and keep quiet when it should speak. And this explains why people can do so many things contrary to the teaching of God's word and commit sin and say my conscience does not condemn me. An evil conscience.

Now the question arises, how can a good conscience be changed to an evil one? We need to remember that men not only possess a good conscience when they come into this world, but they also are indwelt by an evil principle which the Apostle Paul calls the carnal mind, the flesh, the sin that dwelleth in me, and which he says is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. Rom. 8:7. This evil principle which we seem to inherit from Adam, which is also called "our old man.," Rom. 6:6, is always trying to get the supremacy over us and to lead us away from God and righteousness. Hence the dual nature in us that men talk about, the two voices, as the Indian put it, "One tell me to be good, other tell me to do wrong," conscience and carnality. If we yield to carnality or sin and do wrong we must do so under protest of conscience, that is why that young persons feel so ashamed and guilty the first time that they commit some known sin, conscience is faithful and showes them their wrong. But if we continue to follow our evil nature and ignore the voice and pleadings of conscience: and make excuses for our sin and wrongdoing, we gradually silence the voice of that faithful God-given monitor in our breast; and conscience becomes seared, hardened, outraged, and fails to make its feeble voice to be heard in our heart, and finally ceases to function, hence an evil conscience, one under the control of sin, or the old man, the evil principle. So men will often profess to be Christians and even some will try to preach to others while they themselves are practising things which the bible condemns, but they say my conscience does not condemn me. Well, no marvel conscience is dead. I think it was George Washington who said when speaking of conscience, "Labor to keep alive that spark of celestial fire in your breast." But how can we do this? Let the Apostle Paul answer in Rom. 6:12-13, "Let not sin, (that is the evil principle, the old man, or carnal mind), therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves to God." That is the first step, yield wholly to God. Again in Heb. 10:22, "Let us draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled (cleansed) from an evil conscience," etc. Again in Heb. 9:13-14, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh! How much more shall the blood of Christ, purge your conscience from dead works (sin) to serve the living God?" Notice he recommends the cleansing of the heart, from the sin principle, the old man, which he calls dead works by the blood of Christ to deliver the conscience from its dominion and power, that it may be a good conscience, and function normally under the direction of the word of God and the Holy Spirit. Yes, men who have a clean heart have a very sensitive, tender conscience, which warns them of the first thought or approach of sin and approves of all that is right and good, it is a great means of protection and safety when we obey and follow its dictates. And we never get lonely while we have a good conscience with us. It is a most blessed associate and comfort which sustains us through all the trials, misunderstandings and changes that life can bring, and as the poet said, "The sweet cordial we receive at last is conscience of our virtuous actions past." May God help us all through faith in the sanctifying power of the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and obedience to God's word, to obtain and keep a Good Conscience.

ADD TO YOUR FAITH
(Continued from Page One)

as we wish to see them, trusting in our all-wise God, knowing that while we pray and work He is interceding for us, and is undertaking as none other can for the good interests of His cause.

"And to patience godliness," or "Godlikeness." Jesus Christ came to earth and lived for over thirty years that we might have a perfect example to follow. He was God manifest in the flesh. We must study His life as portrayed in the word so we may give sway to the same principles and motives that governed His actions, and seek that near fellowship with Him that we will readily be changed into His image. That godlikeness will show itself in our attitude toward His course, and toward the unsaved.

"And to godliness brotherly kindness,"
"Love the brethren." Possess that power and skill that will enable us to fix and arrange all our human relationships aright and keep them right. Do unto others as we would have them do. Have that loyalty for our brothers and sisters in Christ that we have for our own families that prompts us to do all we can for their best interests, and exposes none of their shortcomings.

"And to brotherly kindness charity," or love. That love which is not human but comes from God. That which Paul has given us a definition of in I Cor. 13.

Thus the chain is linked together, they are so closely connected that the obtaining of one of these virtues brings the others nearer. As we see them so perfectly presented in Christ we can never be satisfied with one-sided and imperfect development in ourselves, but desire that all-around and harmonious growth.

Now, if the obtaining of these graces was optional, if Peter had held them up as luxuries for those spiritually ambitious, some might say the effort was too great, and feel as secure without as with them. But Peter continues to exhort his followers thus—"For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that tocketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

The difference between these two classes is so great that surely none would be so unwise as to fail to add, and thus lose what they already have obtained but "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—Mrs. F. A. Dunlop.

TENT MEETING

Brookville was a busy place last Sunday. The scene was the Quarterly Meeting of the Reformed Baptist Church which was held in a large tent pitched near the school house on the property of W. D. Tompkins. This tent will seat nearly 300 people and was filled to capacity at all three services, with many people standing. Nine ministers were in attendance during the meeting and the inspired crowd heard some wonderful preaching. The praise services filled the tent with shouts of victory and songs of triumph. The evening speaker was the Rev. Henry H. Mosher of Bryant, Indiana, who will continue to preach at the tent every evening in the week except Saturday, and three times on Sunday until further notice.—Hartland Observer.