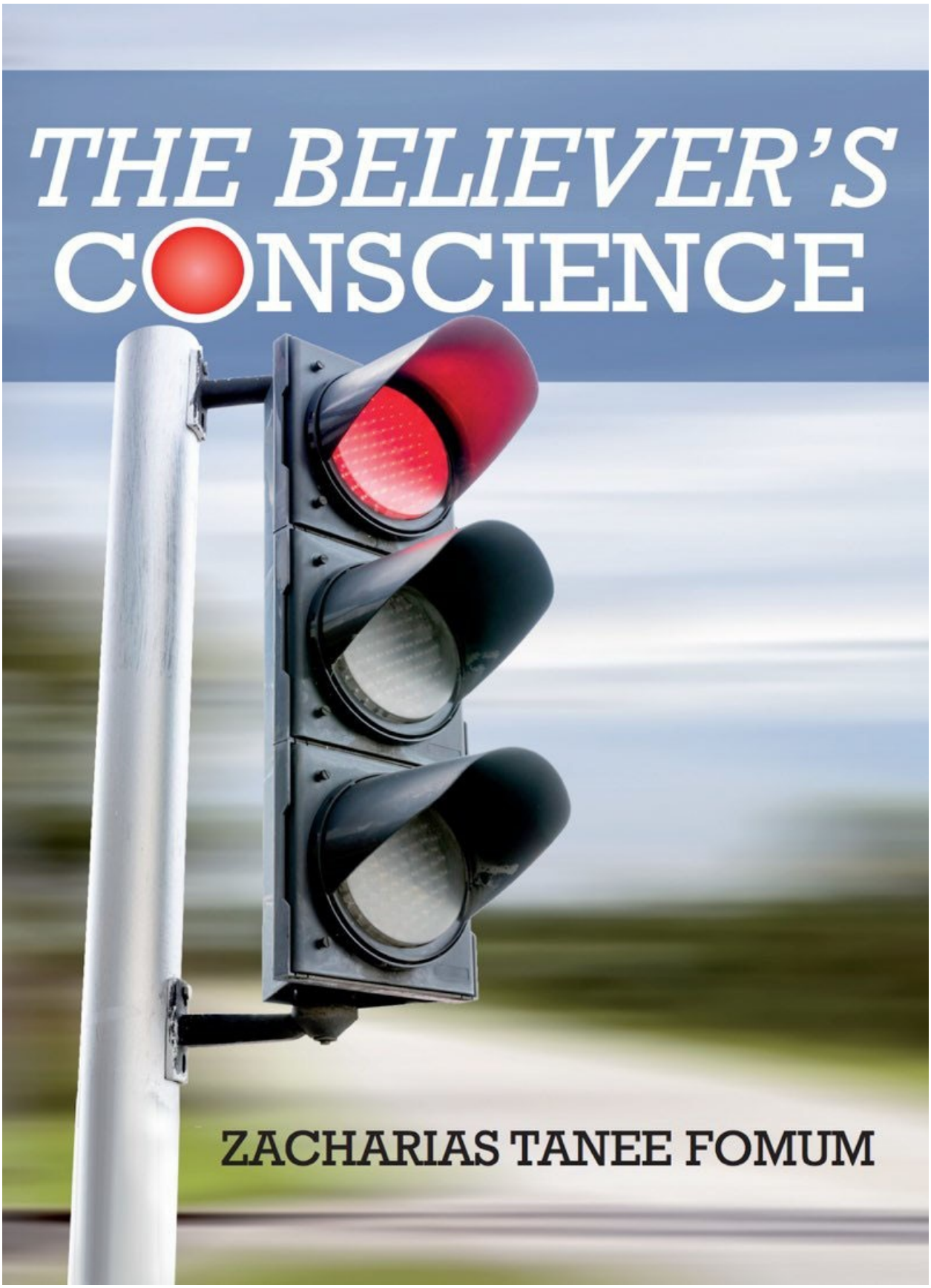
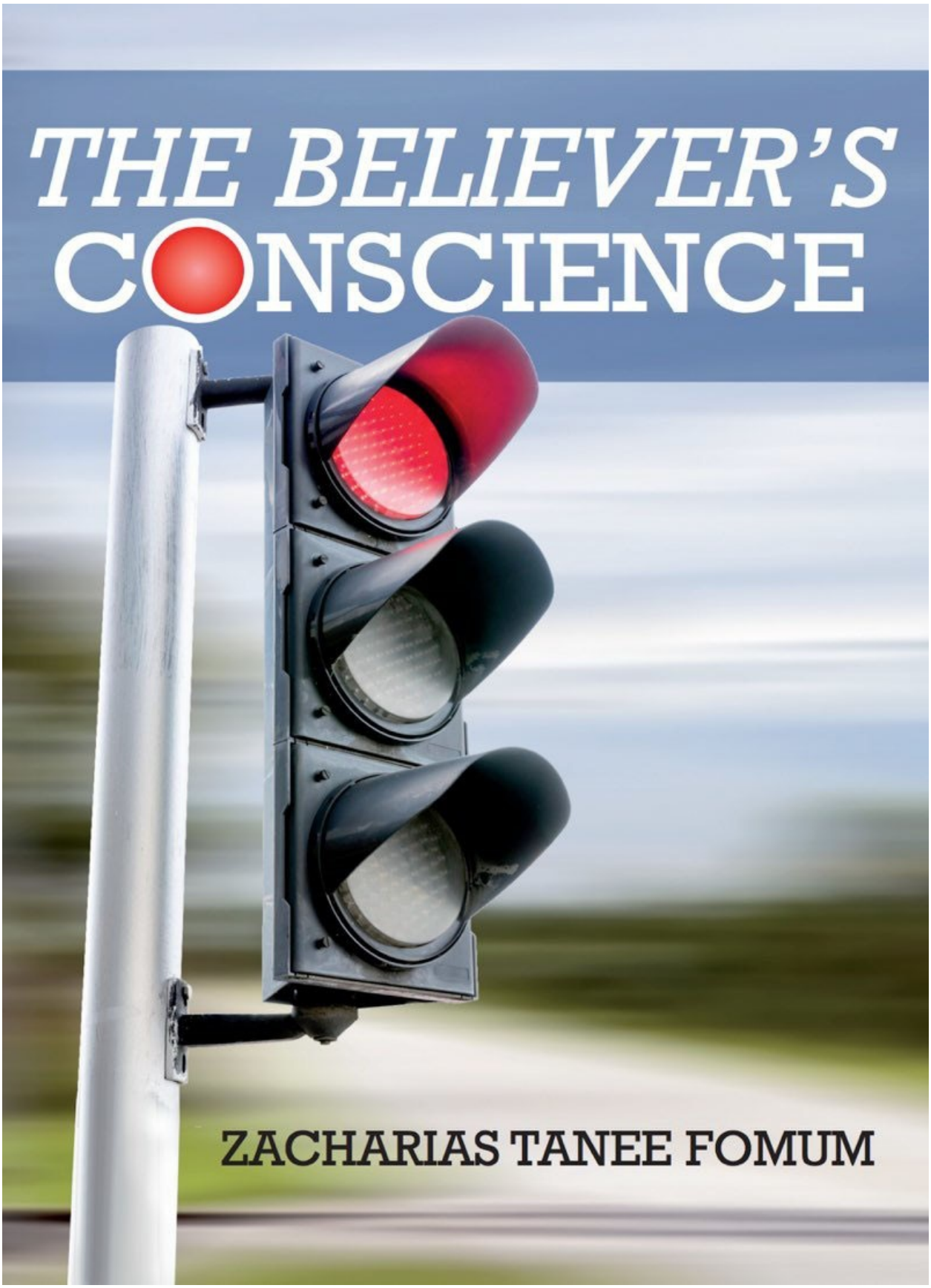
THE BELIEVER'S CONSCIENCE



ZACHARIAS TANEE FOMUM

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The Believer's Conscience

Zacharias Tanee Fomum


CPH
Christian Publishing House

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Very Important!!!

Thank You

About the Author

Also by Z.T. Fomum

Distributors of ZTF Books

Preface



This book “The Believer’s Conscience” is a compilation of the teachings of Professor Zacharias Tanee Fomum addressed to the saints in Yaoundé, Cameron. It is an expository study on conscience - the believer’s conscience. It stresses on the fact that when that which should be exposed is hidden, there is a bad conscience which produces unbelief. The author highlights the fact that an impure heart produces a defiled conscience. A simple offense on the conscience may upset the normal functioning of the intuition and communion with God. The content of conscience depends upon knowledge. In fact, knowledge and the state of the conscience go hand in hand. A clear conscience talks of the capacity to let in the light of God. A man with a good conscience trembles at the Word of God. He invites you to cooperate with God so that you can experience and live with an all-good conscience which is the possession of all those who convert their convictions into actions.

We recommend this book to you dear reader, praying that the Lord will use it to help you enter into the experience of a good conscience as you walk before Him.

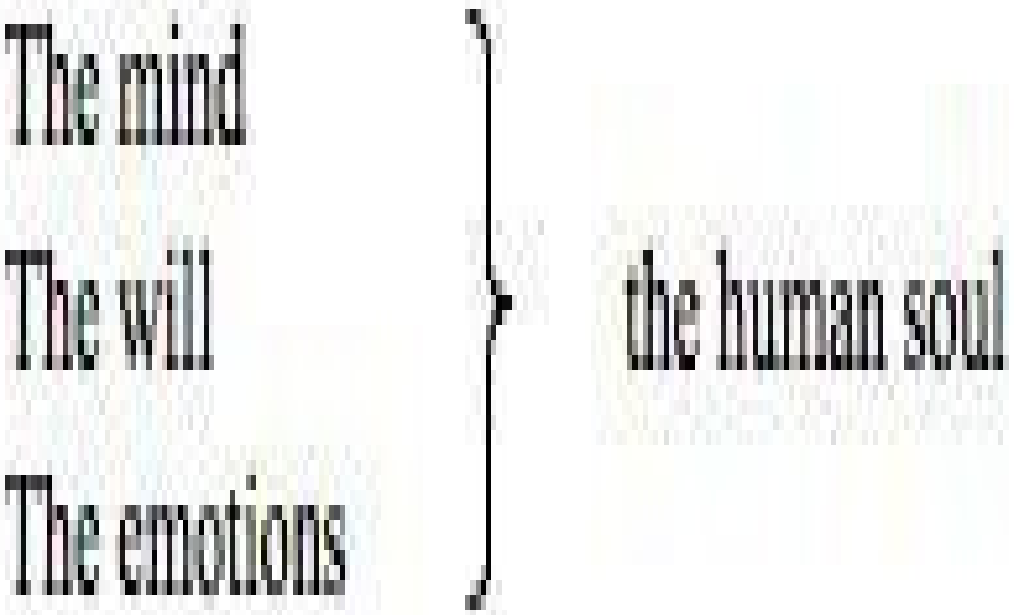
THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

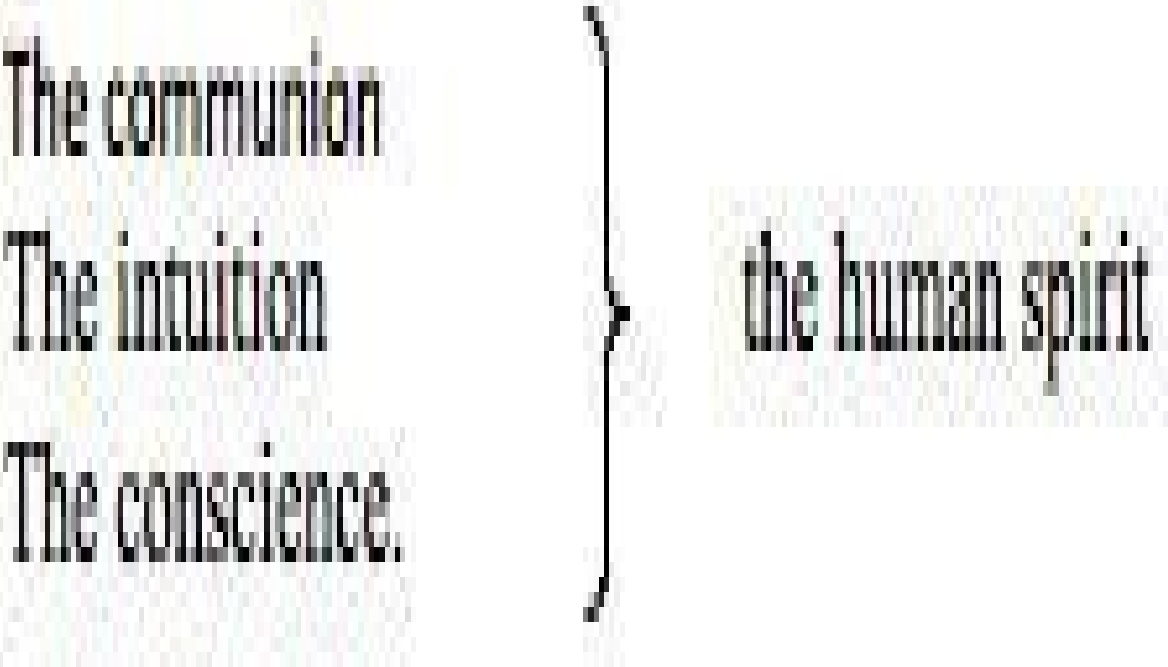
The Pathway To Being Filled

There is a pathway to the Spirit-filled life. You need to know it. We shall begin from the lost stage:

1. LOST

This talks of fallen man in his sin, depravity, death, separation from God. At the eating of the fruit in the garden, everything went wrong with man. Everything about him suffered:


The mind
The will
The emotions
the human soul


The communion
The intuition
The conscience.
the human spirit

From the one who was to live eternally, man became a passing being. The normal companionship with God became a rare thing. Man was lost. His being became wrong. His wrong being led to wrong doing. His scale of values changed. He made the passing into the major. His blindness became phenomenal.

If sinners are to seek God, they must first acknowledge that they are lost. They must come to realize that they are separated from the commonwealth of God. If you do not see the fact that you were very very lost, you will know a very superficial conversion. You may also take the matter of restitution lightly.

A man committed adultery with a Moslem's wife, read our book, "Restitution", and went to repent to the woman, but then, he found out that the woman had already died. The husband of this woman sat him down and had him tell the whole story. After hearing the whole story the man forgave him. He knew he had done wrong and wanted to right it as much as he could. But hypocrites sit on their sin and expect God to bless them.

The Apostle Paul laboured to have a clear conscience before God and before man. He said,

"So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man" (Acts 24:16).

There is the need to be transparent before God and before man; nothing to hide before God and before man.

The normal man will carry out costly restitution in an attempt to put things right. There is financial and moral restitution to be made, and which you must make. Without it, you may be only 50% productive at the height of your ministry. There is a great need for deep and radical restitution to be carried out.

Many brethren have not carried out restitution. Restitution must be carried out for every act of dishonesty done in the past. Did you promise marriage to someone but did not marry the person? You must go and repent.

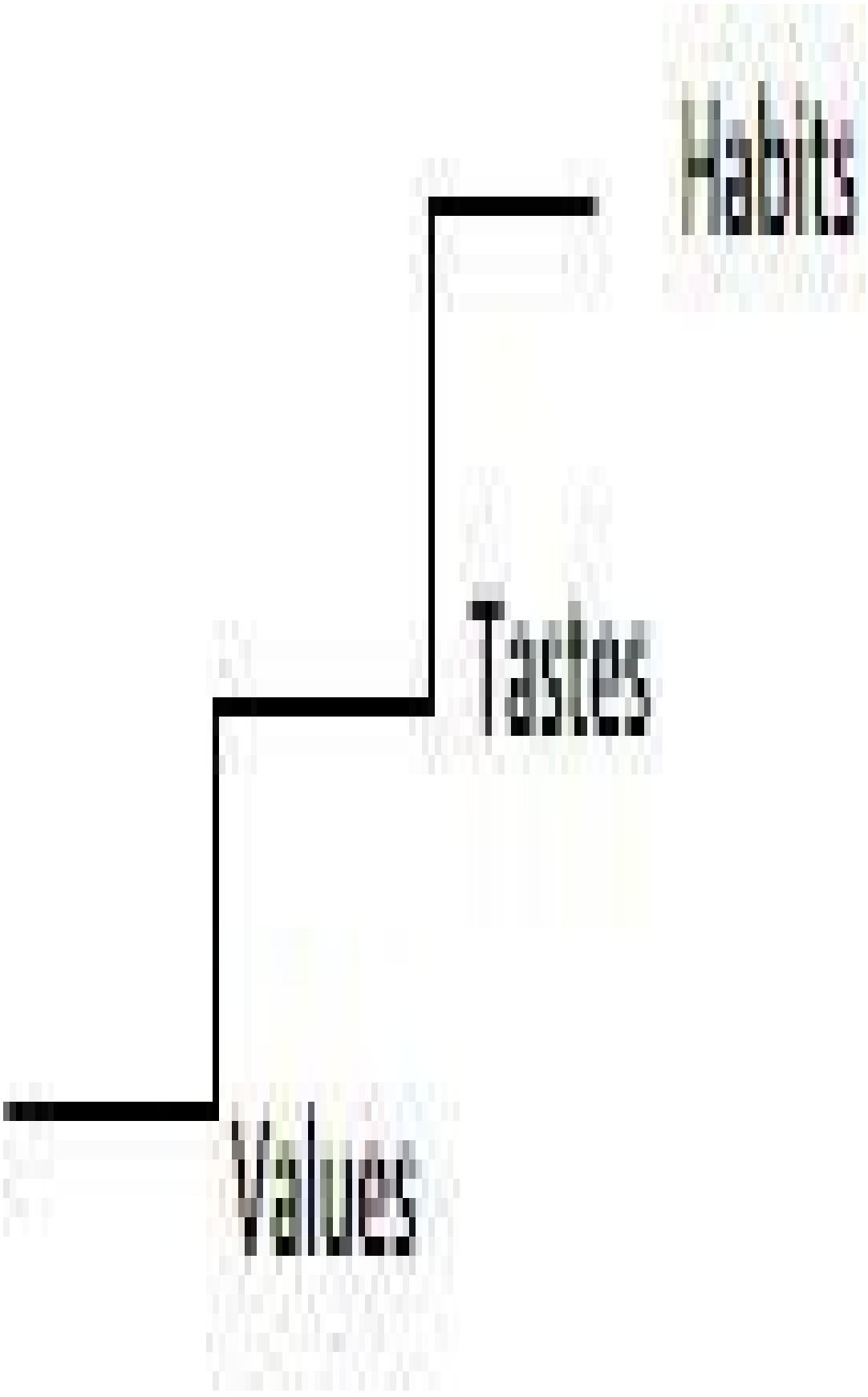
Recently I was convicted of a restitution I had to carry out in Bamenda, a town in Cameroon. Sometime ago I taught in a Teacher Training College in Batibo, for six weeks. Then I was close to a family in Bamenda. Their daughter wanted to go to this school but entry there was very difficult. For her admission, I went and told the principal that I intended to marry the girl. I had not even been friends with the girl at all. I only used my position and marriage to get her into the college. I need to go and repent to her. Her father and mother are dead already. I do not know what God's plan for her was. But by this intervention on my part I surely twisted what she ought to have become. The consequences are great.

The future depends on the revelation of how lost a man was and how he handles it. Let me say this to you very personally - Your future depends on the revelation of how lost you are or were, and how you handle it

2. JUSTIFICATION

The old values must be judged and put away. The old tastes must be judged and thrown away. The values according to the devil, tribe, world and the self must be overthrown. Personal habits must be overthrown and the habits of the Heavenly Man put on. The habits of the world, self and Satan must go.

May God help us to hate all the values that come from the world, the self and Satan. Look at your life in the light of:

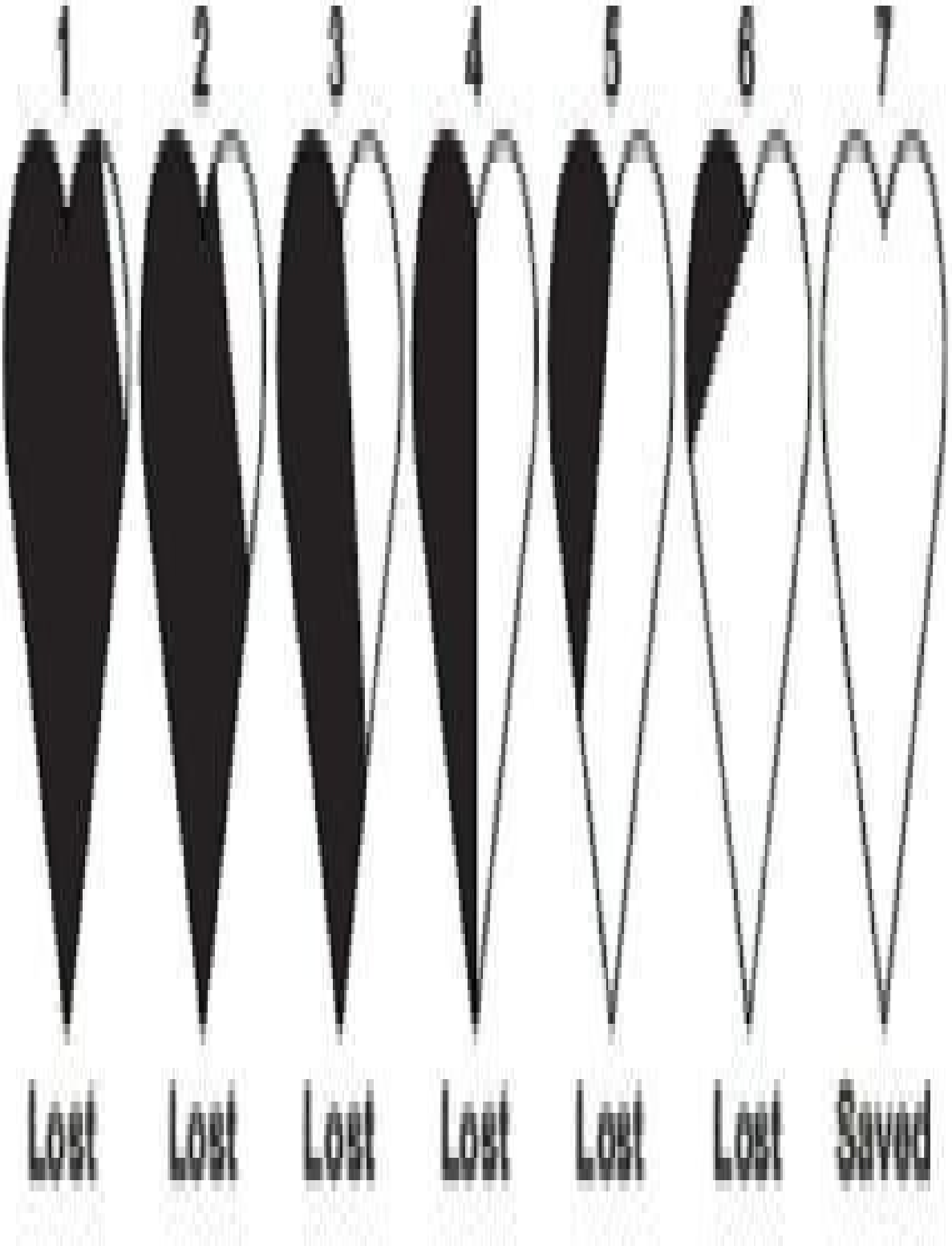

Habits
Tastes
Values

The values, tastes and habits that are not of God must be destroyed so that God may come in. The way not to have a thing is to get rid of it.

3. BAPTISM INTO THE HOLY SPIRIT

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:4).

The baptism into the Holy Spirit is an introduction into the supernatural life of God.


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Lost
Lost
Lost
Lost
Lost
Lost
Saved

At conversion, Jesus can occupy the heart in one of the proportions as shown above. Each of the heart conditions above actually represents seven different people. Only person number seven is normal.

A man needs to pull out everything from his heart so that Jesus may have the total man. The rich young ruler when questioned by Jesus as to the law said,

“Teacher, all these I have kept since I was a boy” (Mark 10:20).

“When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth” (Luke 18:22-23).

Jesus did not allow the rich young ruler to be deceived though he lacked only one thing.

The Matthew version of the same story reads thus:

“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?” Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” (Matthew 19:20-21).

Jesus said, “If you want to be perfect...” For Him conversion began at state seven

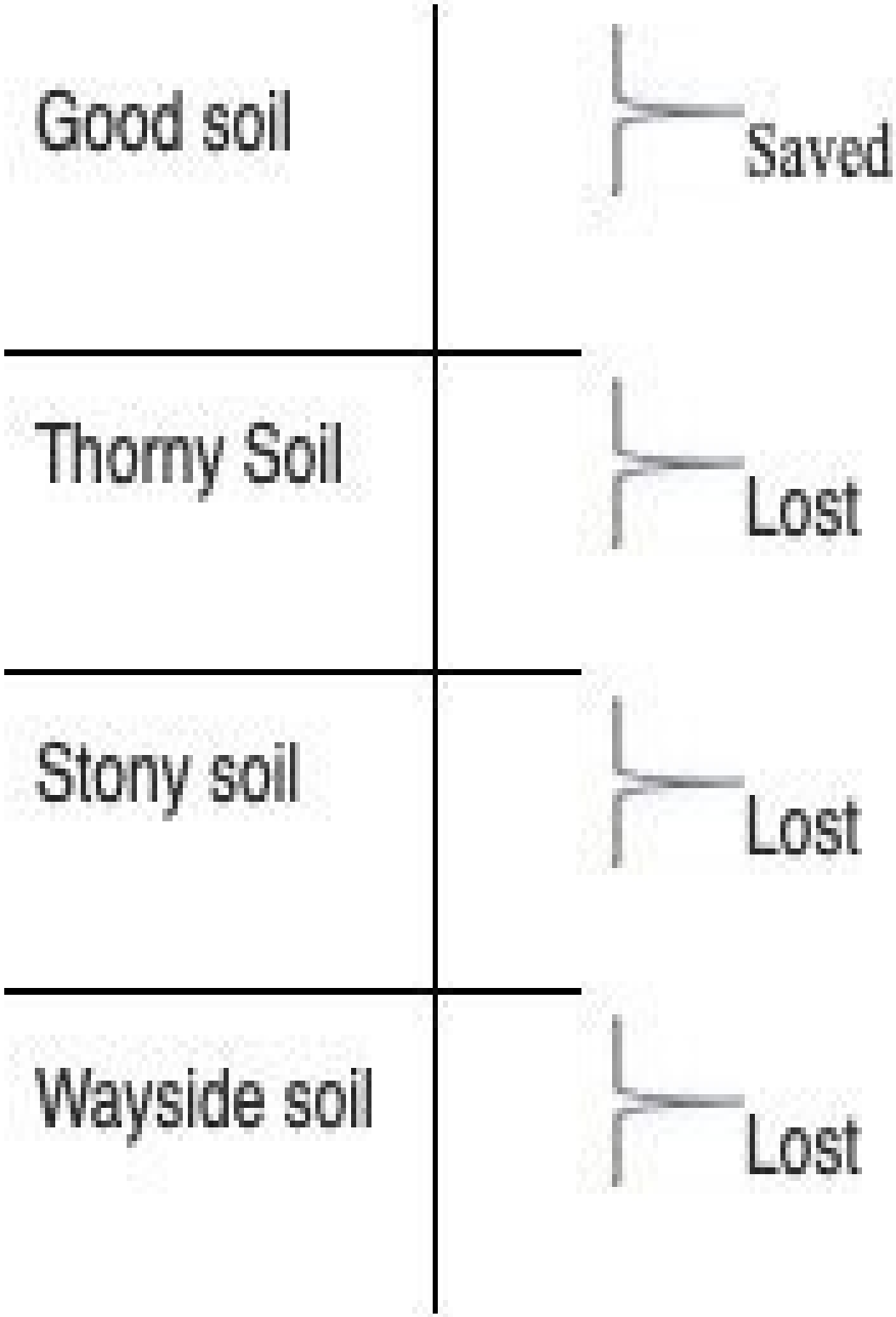
above. Are you converted according to Jesus? Jesus was not ready to convert any who was not in for the all of God. Would Jesus have granted you His salvation? If not, then you are lost, since He has not changed.

If you do not meet Jesus' standards today, then your so-called conversion is counterfeit. You are not saved. A German evangelist was carried in a vision and was shown the book of life. He was very happy to find his name there. But he was also shocked not to find some names he thought should be there.

"Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them. "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to" (Luke 13:23-24).

I really doubt that someone can be saved if he does not give Jesus his all. Jesus could not have raised one set of conditions for the rich young ruler and another set of conditions for the others. The rich young ruler did not give Jesus his all, and as such will not go to heaven. His likes will not go to heaven as well.

The seed that fell on the wayside was lost. The seed that fell on the stony soil was lost. The seed that fell on the thorny soil was lost. Only the seed that fell on the good soil was saved. This should make you think.


Good soil
Saved
Thorny Soil
Lost
Stony soil
Lost
Wayside soil
Lost

This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop" (Luke 8:11-15).

The abundance of worries, riches, pleasures, etc. say that the soil is thorny. The person is lost. I know that a person cannot be saved before he has given Jesus all his time, money, and all. Jesus requires from you what He required from the rich young ruler.

There is the seduction that you can run after the world this way and that and yet maintain your salvation. Those who think and do so may never have been saved by the way.

Are you saved?

The Bible demands that we work at our salvation with fear and trembling. God demands the all of man, that He may give him the all of Jesus Christ.

4. Termination With The Past

There are ten steps in terminating with the past. It all begins with dealing with the sins, weaknesses and infirmities of the great grand parents. My father and mother were believers. But their own parents were idol worshippers. When they offered libation, I was in their loins. I must take this sin upon myself, confess it and break away from it. Research shows that there was no adultery. But they loved wine. One of them for about twenty five years never drank water. He drank and brushed his teeth with palm-wine But there must be immorality somewhere, because one of the descending children committed incest.

In dealing with the sins, weaknesses and infirmities of the grand parents, speak aloud, proclaim your deliverance. You have to divorce with Satan, because it was a marriage with him by your great grand parents. Speak out your separation.

We may put up the steps for terminating with the past as below:

10 Inner healing

9 Physical healing

8 Restitution

7 Demons

6 Curses

5 Post-conversion sins

4 Pre-conversion sins

3 Parents (2 people)

2 Grand parents (4 people)

1 Great grand parents (8 people)

Why do people not rise to the heights of God? They have not separated themselves from the past. If the above steps were handled properly a lot would happen God-ward.

5. Forsaking All Sin.

There are sins that if you commit, you must die. Ananias and Saphira did and died. The man of God from Judah did commit that sin and died. Amnon committed it and died. Absalom sinned unto death.

The sin that leads to death for one man may not be the same for another. There is a sin which if you commit you will not live. And it is a waste of time to pray for a man who has sinned this way. He must die, The word of God says,

“If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. All wrong doing is sin, and there is a sin that does not lead to death”(1 John 5:16-17).

Some people have sinned by gluttony and died right there or soon after. They sinned unto death.

6. Forsaking The Love Of All Things In The World.

Make a list of the things that you have and desire and then forsake them. A person ought to know what he has before he can renounce it. He should make a list of all that he wants and a list of his tastes and values. They are his possessions. If he does not do this, he could be very deceived.

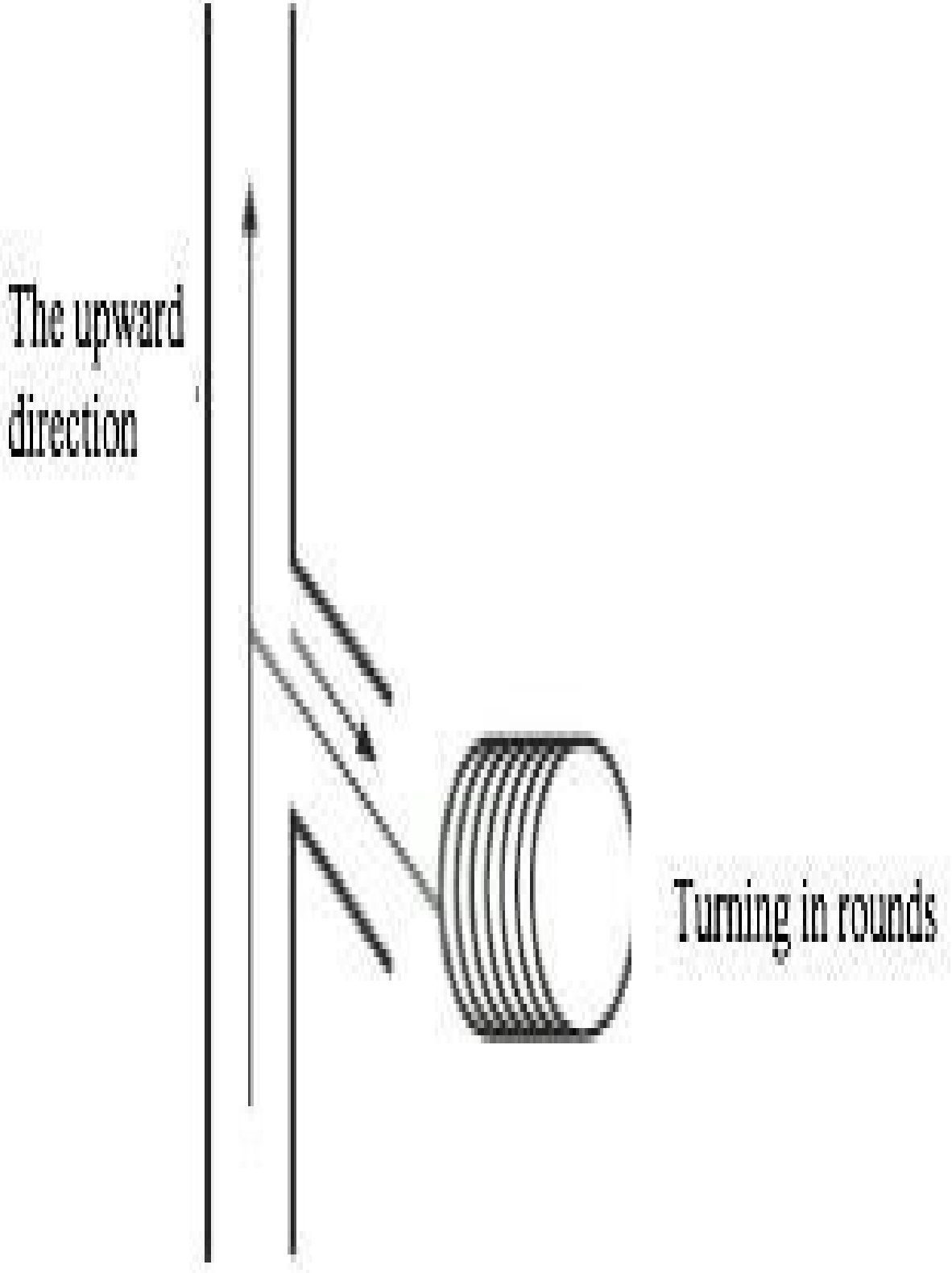
After you have done these, you may now have the right heart condition which receives Jesus Christ and is saved. All the other heart conditions cannot bear fruit. That is why fruitfulness is talked about only with regards to the good soil.

When the heart is still holding back what Jesus demands, it cannot be saved. It is lost until it obeys Jesus Christ. Does this shock you? Well, you know what God is asking for. He is not asking for what you know nothing about.

A missionary left Cameroon earning 60.000 francs. From the mission field he wrote asking for many times his Cameroonian salary in a poorer country. Another missionary wanted to return to Cameroon so as to follow his papers. The Cameroonian government owed him. They are lost men. When a man has problems with money, his whole life is wasted.

We cannot deceive ourselves and in the name of evangelism go out to deceive others. We cannot be instrumental in the hands of God for the lives of others while we ourselves are not right with God.

The other side of the matter is that the things on your heart will soon be the things on the hearts of the people you lead to Christ and more. You will plunge the people into hell. You know what must go. You know that it ought to have gone since. From the day you knew it ought to have gone, you have been wasting time while the thing remained there. From the time God shows a man what is wrong in his life, he falls back if he does not correct it immediately. All he does from that time only turns him in rounds around the same spot.


The upward direction
Turning in rounds

From the day you confronted food, money and preferred to love them, you have been wasting your time since then. Eleven years may be lost in this condition. It is not in the thinking of God that someone can reject the narrow way, go back and be saved. The call to discipleship is the call to partings.

God must have been speaking to you on these lines in diverse ways. Hindrances must not be explained in the social. We must be able to ask - What is God saying? God is surely speaking. When I lost my luggage, I went to God and there was a message correcting me. It is a serious thing because such a hindrance, placed by God by way of a message or warning will affect the church, the man's ministry and his reward. God must be heard whenever there is an obstacle.

The Bible says,

"For God does speak - now one way, now another -though man may not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night when deep sleep falls on men as they slumber in their beds, he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, to turn man from wrongdoing and keep him from pride, to preserve his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword. Or a man may be chastened on a bed of pain with constant distress in his bones, so that his very being finds food repulsive and his soul loathes the choicest meal. His flesh wastes away to nothing, and his bones, once hidden, now stick out. His soul draws near to the pit, and his life to the messengers of death. Yet if there is an angel on his side as a mediator, one out of a thousand, to tell a man what is right for him, to be gracious to him and say, 'Spare him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom for him' - then his flesh is renewed like a child's; it is restored as in the days of his youth. He prays to God and finds favour with him, he sees God's face and shouts for joy; he is restored by God to his righteous state. Then he comes to men and says, 'I sinned, and perverted what was right, but 1 did not get what I deserved. He redeemed my soul from going down to the pit, and I shall live to enjoy the light.' God does all these things to a man - twice, even three times - to

turn back his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him" (Job 33:14-30).

God is always speaking.

7. Forsaking The Love Of The World

The world is a System to which when a man abides he drifts away from the Word. The pursuit for position and standing in society is the love of the world. Issues like the love of news, etc.. are of the world. There are also the choices of the world or choices according to the world.

I have some friends in North India. The man was the Chancellor of a medical school. His daughter, a medical doctor, an eye specialist, is married to a man who hasn't 'A' levels. The man is an evangelist.

Another girl got a masters in agriculture. She married a former drug addict and they are now working to rehabilitate drug addicts.

Have these two girls married according to the world? You can forsake the things of the world, but to forsake the love of the world is a more difficult thing. Your ambitions, plans, where you want to live, how you want to live, how you want to speak, etc. - are they according to the standards of the world?.

The world is false and counterfeit. The world is a spirit that makes people put on false airs and attitudes.

8. Forsaking The Love Of Self.

9. Putting On Christian Character.

10. Consecration Of All.

11. Filled With The Holy Spirit.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not a chance issue. It is not accidental. It is worked through and attained personally. It does not depend on the kind of person who lays hands on you for the purpose. We may summarize the steps to being filled with the Holy Spirit as below:

10 Filled with the Holy Spirit

9 Consecration of all

8 Putting on Christian character

7 Forsaking the love of self

6 Forsaking the love of the world

5 Forsaking the love of everything that is in the world

4 Forsaking all sin

β Terminating with the past

2 Baptism into the Holy Spirit

1 Justified

0 Lost

Notice that the disciples spent three and half years with Jesus but were not filled with the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit in this way comes after work done from inside.

God cannot start filling what is already filled. The vessel must be clean and empty. God will not mix His Spirit with the soiling inside.

It is possible that you want a big church so that you are known for a big pastor; you fast so that you are known for one who fasts. The motives here are wrong and the God of heaven is not mocked.

The Bible says,

“Ask all the people of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted?” (Zechariah 7:5).

They fasted for two months, every year, for seventy years, in vain. God will indeed not be mocked!

The Impact Of One’s Life

There is some amount of power that can be produced by a man at any of the stages below:

$10.000.000.000 \quad 10^{10}$

$387.420.489 \quad 9^9$

$6.777.216 \quad 8^8$

$823.543 \quad 7^7$

$46.656 \quad 6^6$

$3.125 \quad 5^5$

$256 \quad 4^4$

$27 \quad 3^3$

$4 \quad 2^2$

$1 \quad 1^1$

$0 \quad 0$

Two people may pray or fast for same duration in time, but produce totally different results. One may do a forty-day fast and score zero. Another may score 10.000.000.000.

You may choose a partner at 7 ^{7} or at 10 ^{10}. You may be praying at 9 ^{9} whereas your spouse is praying at 3 ^{3}. The two hours of prayer for a man at 9 ^{9} and another at 4 ^{4} are miles apart. What matters is how much of you Christ has possessed. The ball is in your court.

People place themselves where they want to. God has no favourites. We are talking here about the inner story of your life and service. You are where you are by the choices you have made. You will be where you will be in the future by the choices you are making now. What you think about yourself does not change the facts. Do something about it.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE I

Conscience And Obedience I

There comes a time when a man hears God no more. Every time you

disobeyed,

delayed obedience,

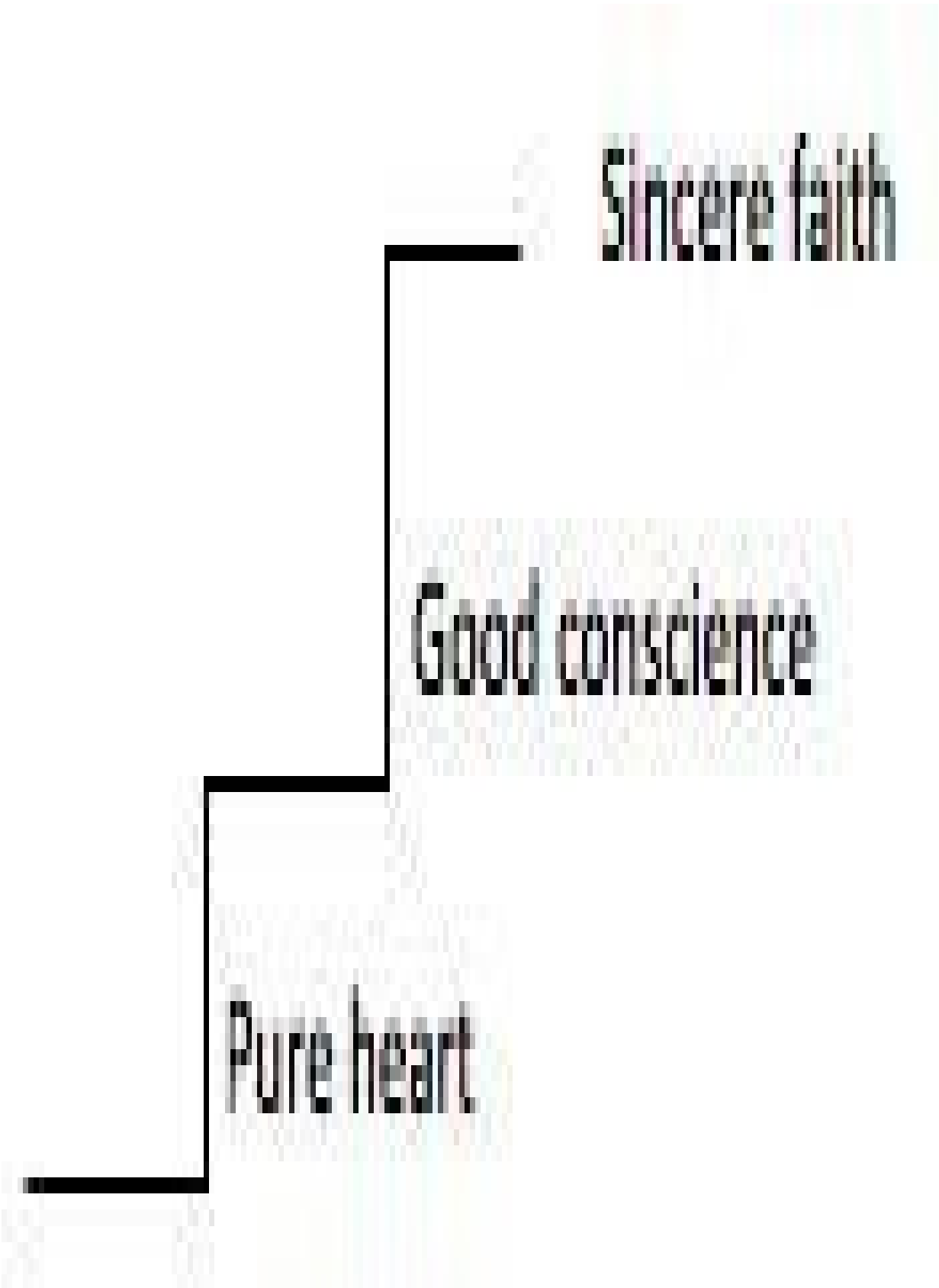
obeyed partially,

you destroyed your conscience. People who obey only later, generally do not hear God anymore.

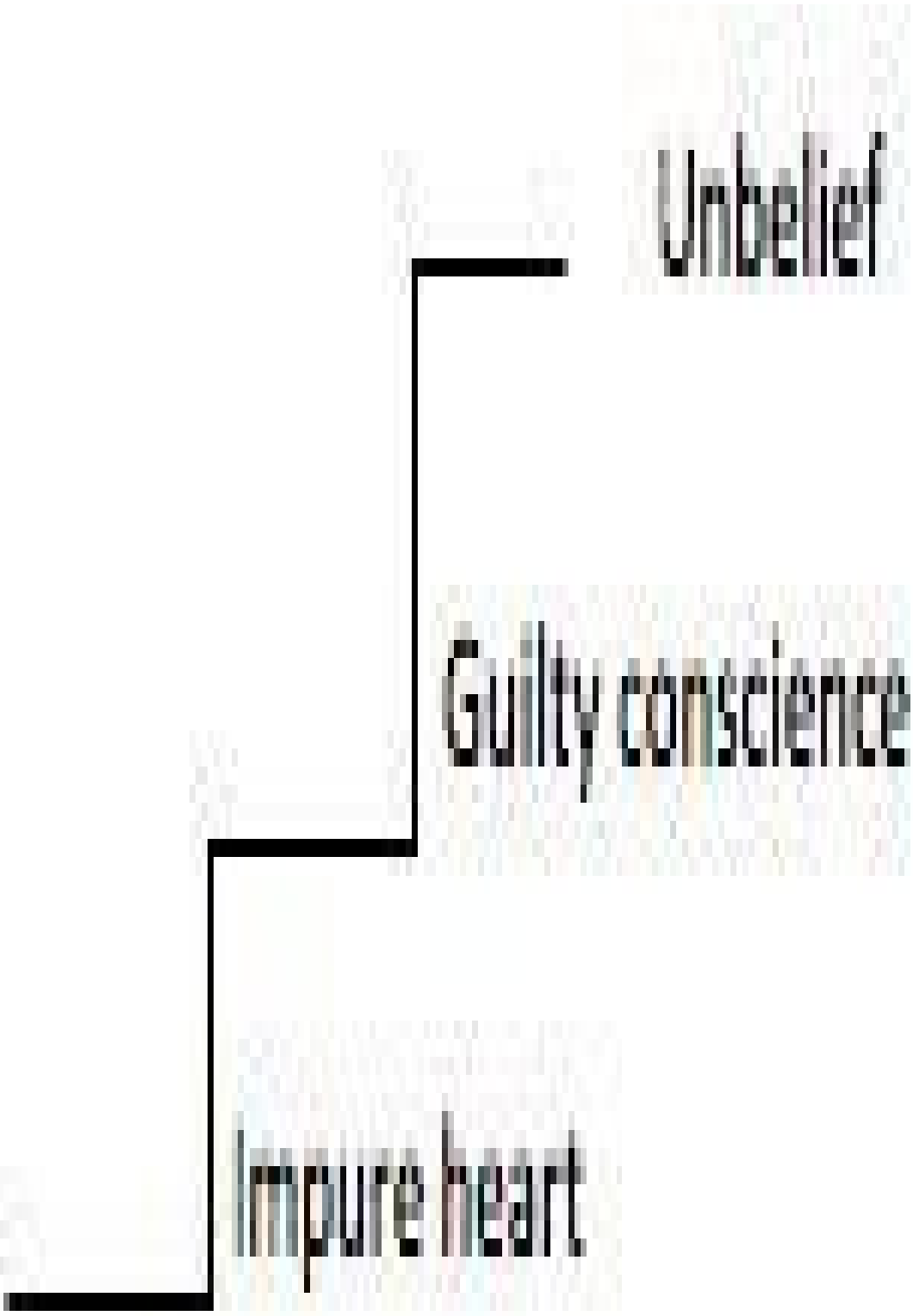
Purity, Conscience And Faith

“And this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also -not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience towards God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21). “I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.” (2 Timothy 1:5). Take note

of these elements:


Sincere faith
Good conscience
Pure heart

We could equally safely say:


Unbelief
Guilty conscience
Impure heart

The person with an impure heart, guilty conscience, and caught in unbelief cannot follow. He cannot believe. Most wives are in this state. They really do not follow. The guilt of their past lives produces unbelief in them. The best wives seem to follow dragging.

When that which should be exposed is hidden, there is a bad conscience, which produces unbelief. I know from experience that those who have followed me wholeheartedly have also opened up to me wholeheartedly. They took the risk to tell me that which could make them to be rejected.

Conscience And The Power To Believe

An impure heart produces a defiled conscience. When the conscience is defiled, faith cannot be borne. While you are not known because you are hiding, you have a bad conscience. You are paralysed. Paul could say to Timothy,

"I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers" (2 Timothy 1:3).

When you hide things in your heart that you should speak out, your conscience is defiled, guilty, corrupt, hardened and finally seared.

Those who cannot believe man cannot believe God. Some men cannot believe man at all. They cannot, as well, believe God at all. In the matter of believing, whether God or man, the same organs are involved.

When the conscience, the window of God’s voice is guilty, hardened, or seared, no light can come in; the man cannot hear God.

You cannot resist a spiritual man and remain the same. You soon find that in that resistance, you have equally resisted God. Resisting does harm to the conscience.

When a person has very often resisted spiritual authority, his capacity to grasp God’s will becomes deadened.

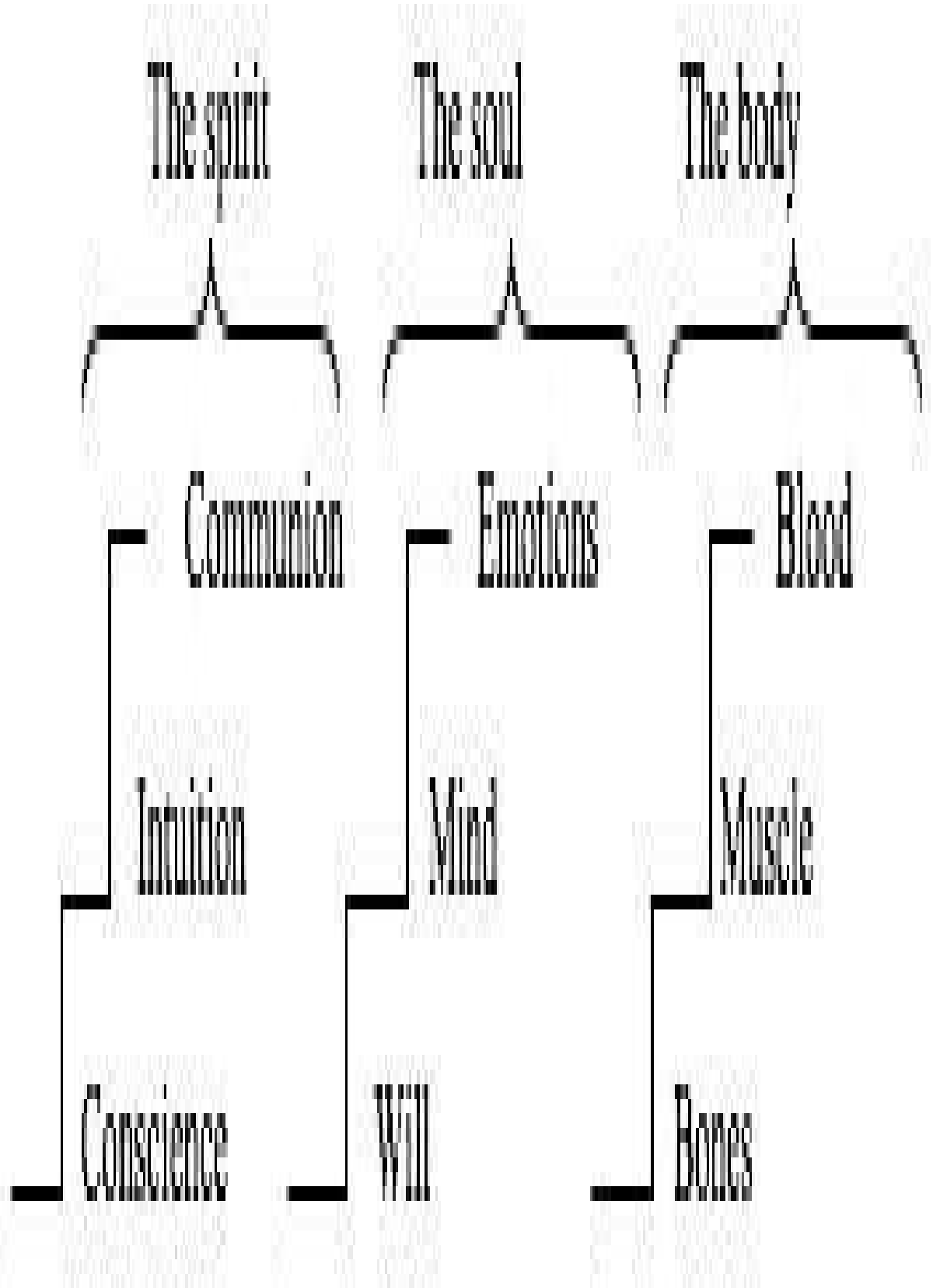
Conscience And Repentance

The wives of many leaders become hardened as a pattern. They do not know unending tears of sorrow in repentance. With deep repentance, in godly sorrow, the dirt that laid on the conscience is cleansed. But when there is no such repentance, the conscience is darkened.

If acid drops on a surface and is wiped immediately, there is not much of a problem. If it is allowed to stay for some time, it corrodes. Sin, left long upon the conscience corrodes. Reduce the time you realise you have sinned and the time you repent into a matter of seconds.

Our son Paul looks like the weakest of our children, but his readiness to repent makes it that he will go further than the rest of our children. The others have well-developed souls; he has a well-developed spirit. The spirit is what prevails in the long run.

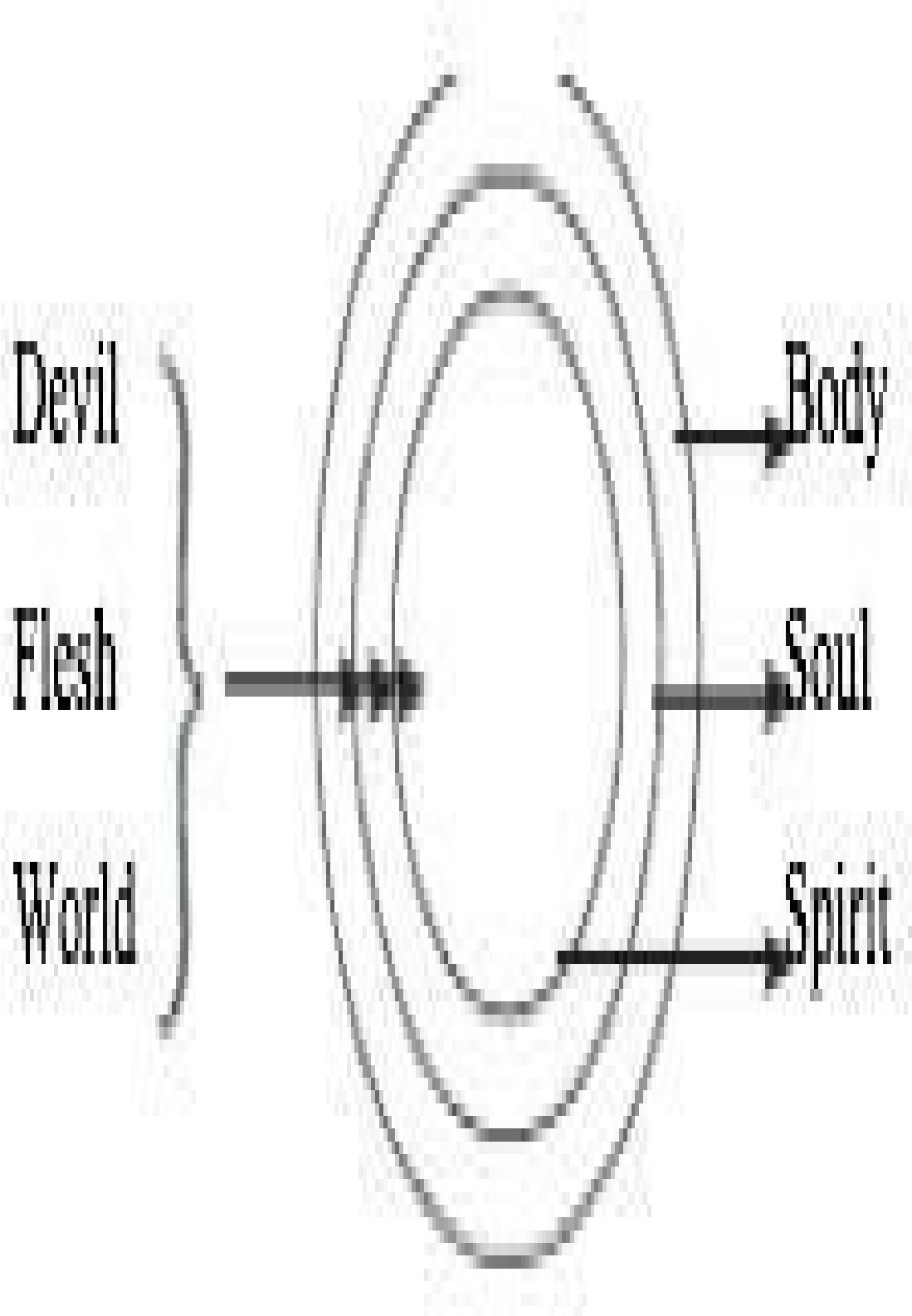
Spirit, Soul, Body


The spirit
The soul
The body
Communion
Emotions
Blood
Intuition
Mind
Muscle
Conscience
Will
Bones

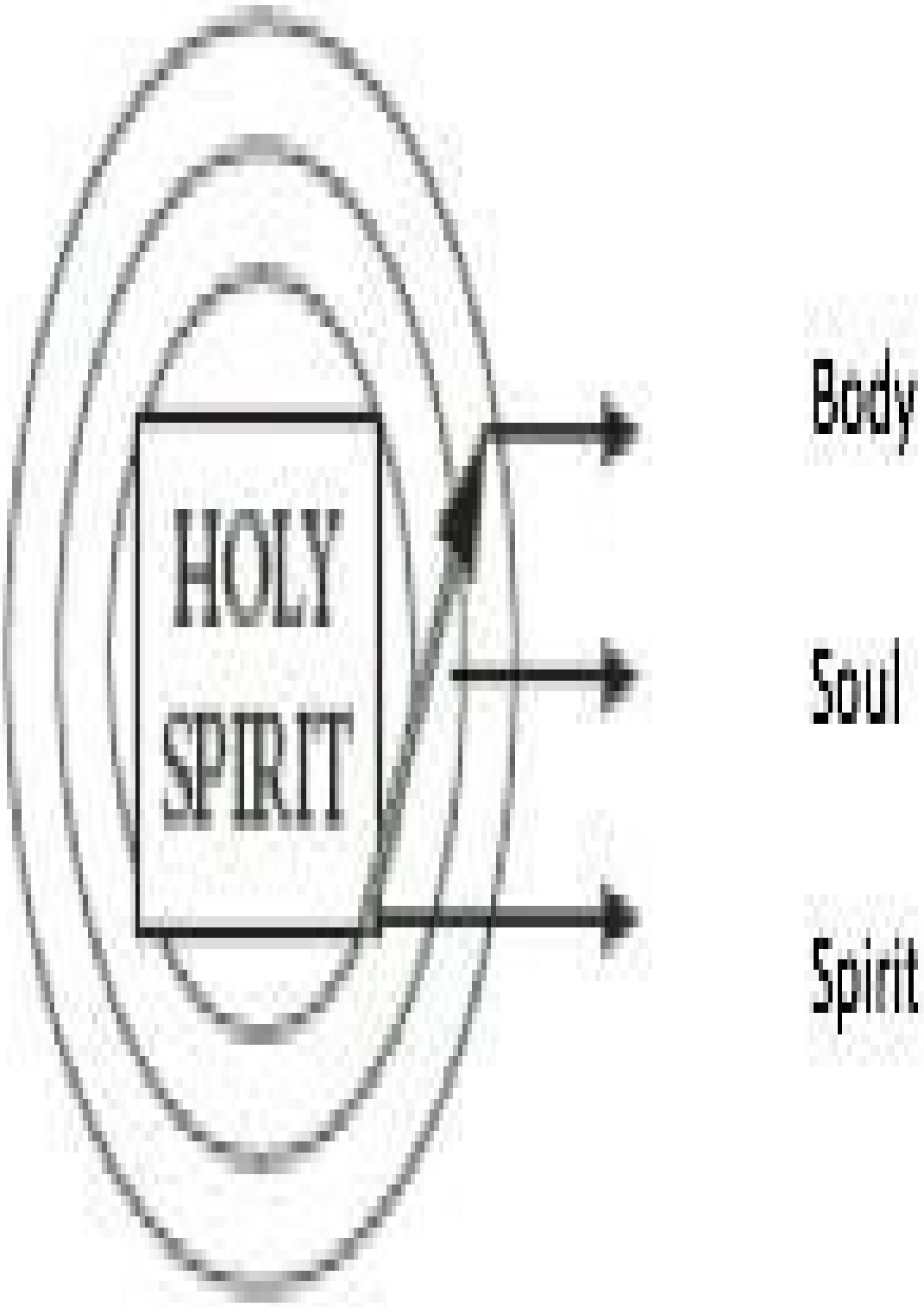
The power to commune with God, reach out to God and the power to receive truth without facts, by the intuition are functions of the spirit. You do not touch God in the physical. You touch God in the spirit. You can also reach out with your spirit to the spirit of another.

The tragedy is that believers worship the soul and its functions. Until the mind is renewed, the will remade and the emotions remade, these mean nothing to God.

The carnal man is moved from the body, to the soul, to the spirit, by the flesh, the world, the devil.


Devil
Flesh
World
Body
Soul
Spirit

A spiritual man is moved from the spirit, to the soul, to the body by the Holy Spirit.


HOLY
SPIRIT
Body
Soul
Spirit

The Hardened Conscience

The hardened conscience, the hardened heart, are the lot of those who will rather justify than repent. When a man would rather justify his sin than repent, this builds a barrier and makes the person detestable. When you touch such a person, you are wounded.

I remember somebody about whom I have asked ten times whether he has a heart. You could find all else except the milk of human kindness in this person.

A man may have a very strong mind and will, and yet be very dead. Please, take the slightest opportunity to repent and repent deeply. Let nothing sinful be found about which you have not repented of thoroughly.

When the faults of the carnal are pointed out, they react in opposition or justification. When the faults of a man with a broken and contrite heart are exposed, he repents of the faults and beyond what was pointed at.

A Clear Conscience

Paul says,

“They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Timothy 3:9).

“My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me” (1 Corinthians 4:4).

A clear conscience talks of the capacity to let in the light of God. A good conscience talks of the substance of the conscience. It talks of the overall content of the conscience.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE II

Conscience And Knowledge

The content of conscience depends upon knowledge. When what you know is wrong, you may have a good conscience about it though being in the wrong. In some tribes, the power to seduce women is applauded. Without the light of the gospel, fornication is no sin there. A man can therefore be fornicating with a good conscience.

There was a time we did not see what was wrong in divorce and remarriage. That was based on the light we had on the issue at that time. But as we got more light, we have had to take God's position in the matter.

There are traditions where an only girl to the family is not allowed to marry. She is allowed to produce children with men out of wedlock. Such a girl could do so with a good conscience.

In other cultures a girl must prove her fertility by becoming pregnant at home. This qualifies her for marriage. Hardly is the act of producing her bastard called fornication and scorned. A sister told us that until she met us, she never thought that fornication was sin. She knew the problem was with adultery.

Paul persecuted the believers with a good conscience. It never occurred to him that he was doing wrong until he heard the voice of Jesus. He had a clear conscience in the wrong. And after that he walked with a clear conscience according to the light he now had. He himself says,

"...My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day" (Acts 23:1).

Before conversion and even after conversion, conscience judges and passes verdict on the basis of its knowledge.

A Seared Conscience

A seared conscience is one that cannot feel anymore. When you are jealous about where God has placed another man, your conscience becomes hardened. The disciples' hearts were hardened because they fought for position.

When the corrupt conscience persists, it becomes hardened. It is no longer touchable. You will have to shake the person to awareness. When it is not corrected, the hardened conscience becomes seared. And when the conscience is seared, you see the things the man does and you cannot understand, yet the man is at rest. He does very horrible things from a position of rest.

Where are you? What type of conscience do you have?

You can then understand why some people can be so stubborn and remain

unchanged. Their consciences have been seared. They could be seared in dirt, disorder, prayerlessness etc.. one disobedience paves the way for further disobedience, until it becomes the traced imprisoning path.

Conscience And God's Demands

When God speaks to you in your meditation and you do not go and obey, you may hear something else in your next meditation. I know it by experience. When God speaks for the first time, he speaks at the highest level. When there is hesitation, and there is fear, or rationalisation, He lowers the level because the highest level has been rejected. If things are put right, the person can return to the initial level.

When all is well, God makes demands from heaven's point of view. When unaccepted, the coming light is reduced. If that level is again not accepted by man, the light may as well be reduced. Those who know God also always know the highest calls of God and His highest demands on them. They will always go back to them if they want God's best.

When the world and the things of the world, etc.. come in, what was received from God is reduced and conscience sinks. The Bible says,

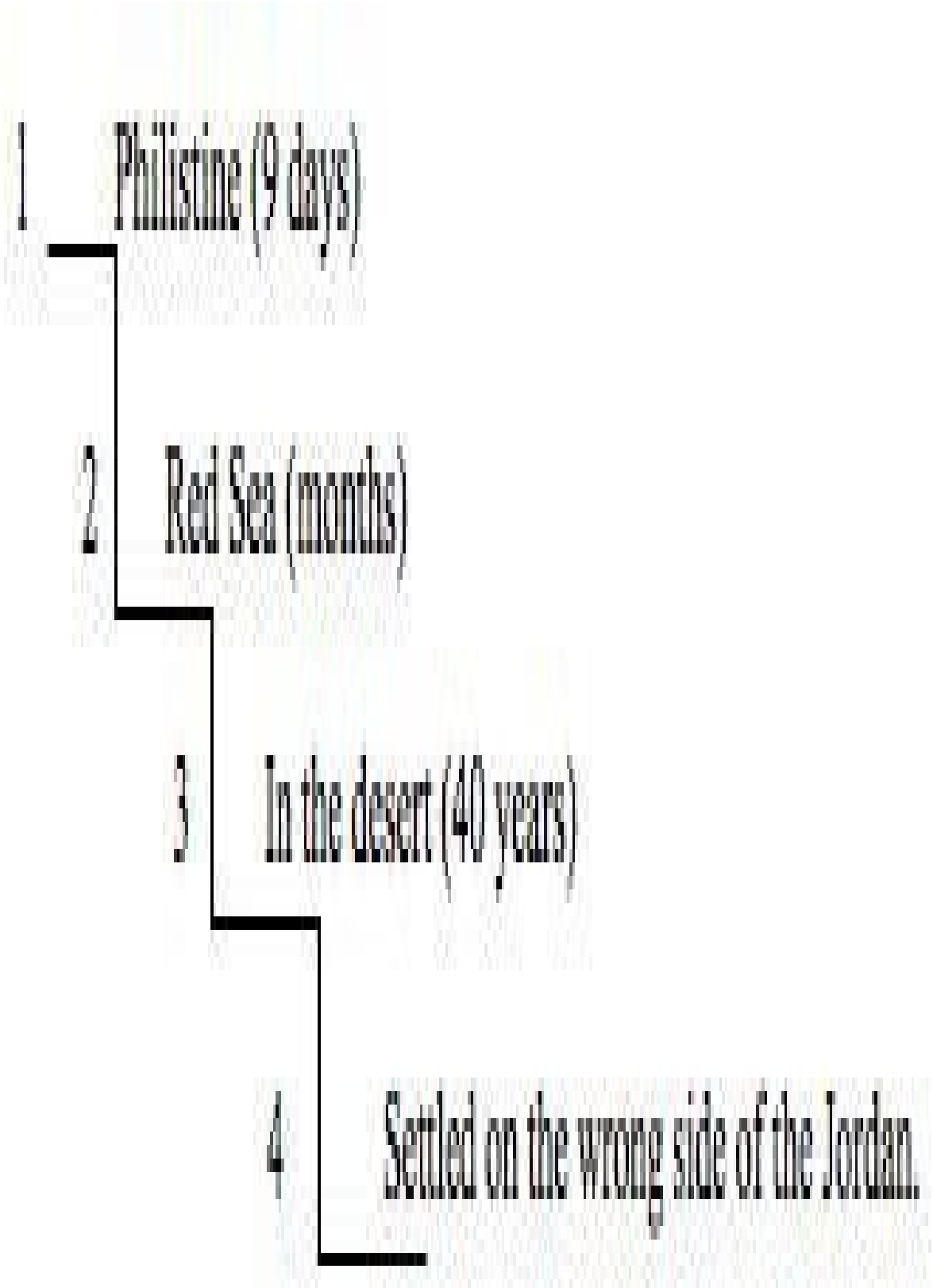
"I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horses" (Exodus 13:17-18).

We may further illustrate this from the example of the children of Israel and their

departure from Egypt. The will of God and the highest level their conscience could operate was to go through the Philistine country. But God saw their hearts and gave them another way, the Red Sea. Even when they had taken the way of the Red Sea, they yet hesitated. They had to send spies to spy the land wherein the Lord was sending them. When the spies gave their report, the Bible says,

"That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud" (Numbers 14:1).

They had the following possibilities:


1 Philistine (9 days)
2 Red Sea (months)
3 In the desert (40 years)
4 Settled on the wrong side of the Jordan.

You can be operating at one of the four levels above. Levels two, three and four are for those in search for security, indulgence and peace. It is also the pathway of rebellion and unbelief.

Conscience And The Consequences Of Sin

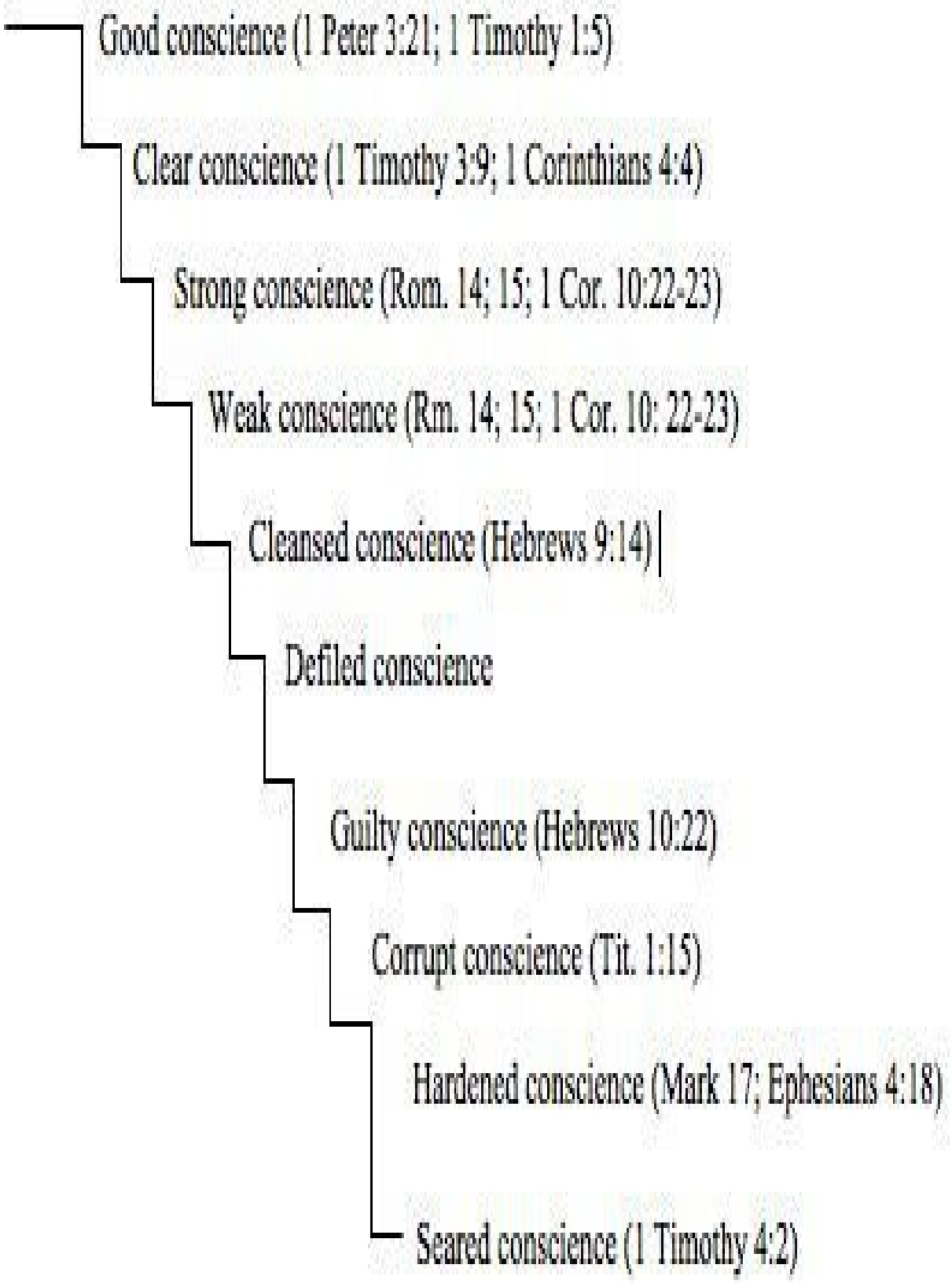
There is no sin that has no consequences. You cannot violate the laws of God in the Bible, and those written in your heart by the Holy Spirit and remain the same person.

When you repent afterwards, not immediately, you are no longer the same. The Christian life was meant to be walked in total and immediate obedience to Jesus. Any disobedience, however small, has consequences.

Every possession that Jesus would not have possessed is a liability. Every desire that Jesus would not have permitted is disastrous.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE III

The Whole Picture


Good conscience (1 Peter 3:21; 1 Timothy 1:5)
Clear conscience (1 Timothy 3:9; 1 Corinthians 4:4)
Strong conscience (Rom. 14; 15; 1 Cor. 10:22-23)
Weak conscience (Rm. 14; 15; 1 Cor. 10: 22-23)
Cleansed conscience (Hebrews 9:14)
Defiled conscience
Guilty conscience (Hebrews 10:22)
Corrupt conscience (Tit. 1:15)
Hardened conscience (Mark 17; Ephesians 4:18)
Seared conscience (1 Timothy 4:2)

The Good Conscience

The man with a good conscience trembles at the word of God. The Bible says,

“Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.” (Ezra 9:4).

Those with a good conscience dare not disobey the word of God. There are others who brush things aside.

The heights to which people can rise in spiritual progress are just as high as the heavens are from the earth. Two people can be together and be so far apart as Saturn is from the Earth.

How many people are troubled when they lie? To what degree?

Once a sister told a lie, and the whole night could not sleep. First thing next day, very early she had to solve the problem.

A sister in East Africa was betrothed to an unbeliever. In the beginning the thing troubled her conscience. But along time she got her “peace” about it. The facts had not changed. Her conscience had changed.

Obedience leads to authority. As you obey Him, you establish the authority of conscience. We plead with you to obey promptly. We plead with you to stop justifying. When a person repents, further repentance is possible. When he refuses to repent, repentance becomes more difficult.

As we obey, we draw closer. As we disobey, we draw apart. If you think an evil thought, stop, repent and be restored. Why? Your conscience can be seared because of sin committed in thought. God sees the heart.

What we say to man must be tested before God and before the man talked to. The sins of the heart are to be confessed to God alone. But sins in speech are to be confessed to God and to the person who heard them, because the person has been destroyed by that sin.

Conscience And Sin

Let every evil that comes into your mind be confessed, repented of and abandoned before God. If not, a mountain may build between you and God. As a man thinks, so he is. A thought could be transforming away from God. Many never radically confess the sins of the mind. They only later on discover that their channels of spiritual receptibility have reduced or closed up.

God searches and knows the motives. The motives are recorded on the conscience. Conscience weighs and searches the motives. When you are lying, God gets the facts and registers them. They will pursue you. O that we will walk with God! O that all falsehood be abandoned!

The Clear Conscience I

Paul says,

“I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God” (1 Corinthians 4:3-5).

Note what he says, “My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent.” God is the highest standard. My conscience can be clear because of limited light. When greater light comes, my conscience is no longer clear on the same issue.

If I keep to the light-level I have, I will have no problems in my conscience. If light increases and my behaviour remains at the same level, I begin to have problems in my conscience.

For example, I have a revelation of the perishing souls of men. Consequently, I cut down to the maximum in my finances so that I may be able to give to the perishing souls of men. It was not so before. But since I got that light, my conscience no longer tolerates what it used to tolerate.

Some people will not give at my level and yet maintain a good conscience. This ties in with the light they have received. Some people give 10% and are very much in harmony with themselves. If I give 90%, I will still be troubled, because

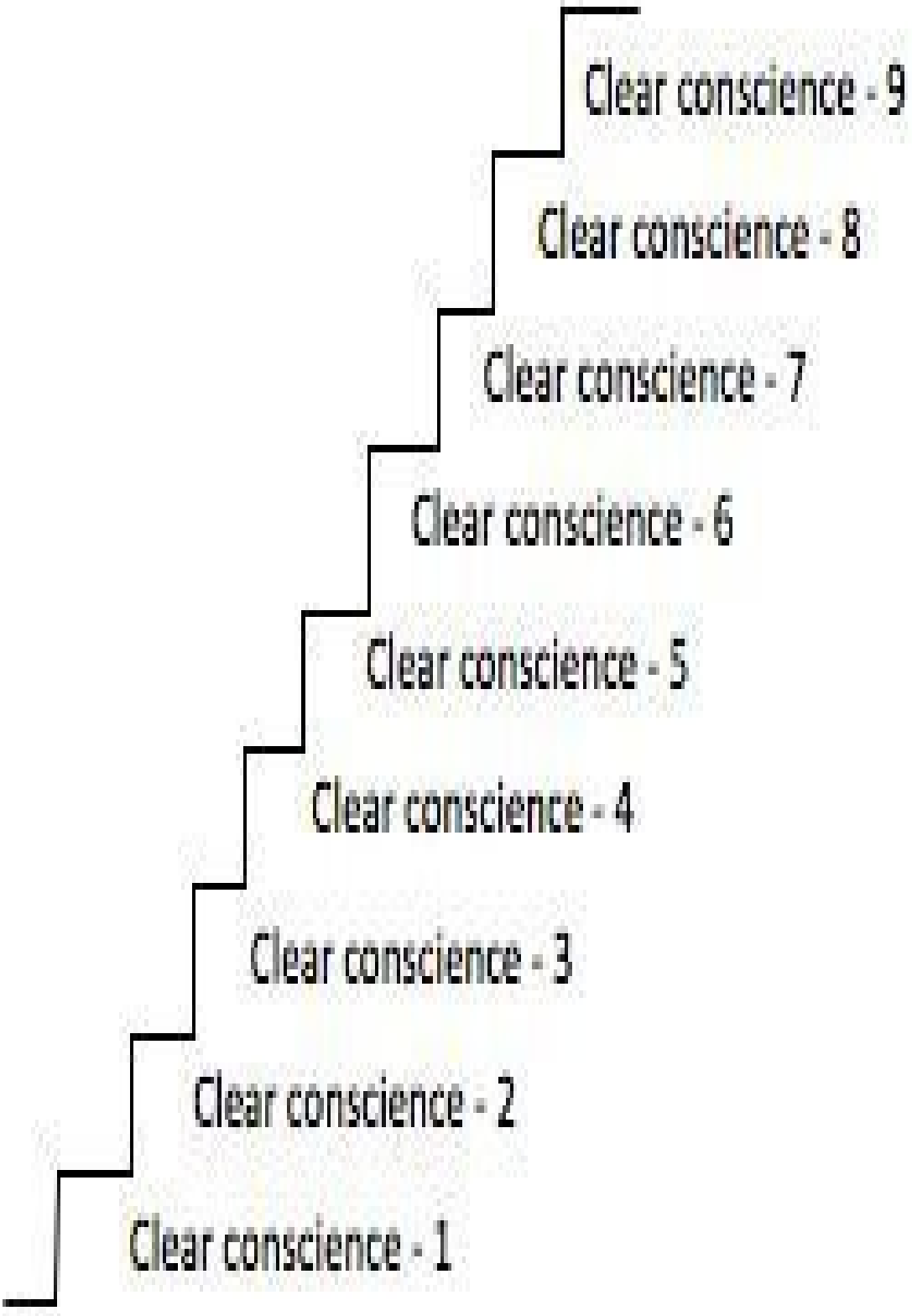
of what I have seen. There are constraints laid upon me because of what I have seen.

I cannot tolerate around me what could be invested into the perishing souls of men. Once I was desperate to sell a car we had, so as to invest into the gospel. A brother by me wondered why he never had such desires.

You only need to have a man see, and he can no longer be the same. When the light of God comes into your life, as it were, the content of your conscience increases. You now see at a new level. If you do not act at that level, you now have a troubled conscience.

The Clear Conscience II

There are varying degrees of the clear conscience


Clear conscience - 9
Clear conscience - 8
Clear conscience - 7
Clear conscience - 6
Clear conscience - 5
Clear conscience - 4
Clear conscience - 3
Clear conscience - 2
Clear conscience - 1

As a person walks increasingly in the holiness of God, his conscience becomes clearer and clearer. This means that things that his conscience may permit today, may be disapproved in the future because of the progress that the conscience has made in going from “clear conscience - 1” to “clear conscience - 2”

The Believer’s Commitments

Any commitment a believer makes, except to sin, he breaks it to his own judgement. Let us take an example, “As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgement on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge” (1 Timothy 5:11-12). They said it because of their dedication to Christ. Now they want to marry and bring judgement to themselves because they are violating what they themselves established before God.

There are things, which God Himself will put into a man’s conscience. There are also things, which a man, out of his commitment to Christ will commit himself to do. Either way, if the man fails to accomplish the commitment, his conscience is troubled. Get to work until you have accomplished the things that you promised God and which have been registered in your conscience.

Superficial repentance cannot calm a good conscience. Make sure that you repent very deeply to the restoration of your conscience. If there is no deep assurance that you have repented, the guilt in your conscience may remain. A guilty conscience is sometimes a demand for deeper repentance.

You may also need to know that conscience is the deciding organ of the spirit and the will is the deciding organ of the soul. Although this is so, a Spirit-

controlled man will have his will subjected to the dictates of the conscience.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE IV

The Impact Of Sin On Conscience

A simple offence on the conscience may upset the normal functioning of the intuition and communion with God. As soon as a believer is conscious of sin, his spirit gathers strength to suppress the sin so that there is little left to carry God-wards.

When you sin, all the force of your person is gathered to allow for recognition, for repentance, to be worked with the Holy Spirit so that the sin is eliminated. When another sin is committed, the same process is repeated. So the person who sins often has the whole inner energy of his being deployed to bring him to conviction, repentance and the forsaking of the sin. That person has no impetus for the ascent towards God.

Every sin, however small;

Every love of the world;

Every love of the things of the world;

Every act of self; is a hindrance to true spirituality, for, true spirituality is the ascension God-wards.

When conscience is carried away with the elimination of sin instead of the upward move, a lot of evil has been done. That is why the believer should not sin. John says, “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin.”

Everything should be done to keep man away from all sin so that his conscience is preoccupied with transporting him God-ward.

When a person takes a decision, everything changes. When, for example, he decides to give all to God, everything pulls God-ward.

We have said, conscience attaches itself to the highest standards that a man’s spirit knows. As we grow in the Christian life, our standards get higher and higher and conscience is more and more alive.

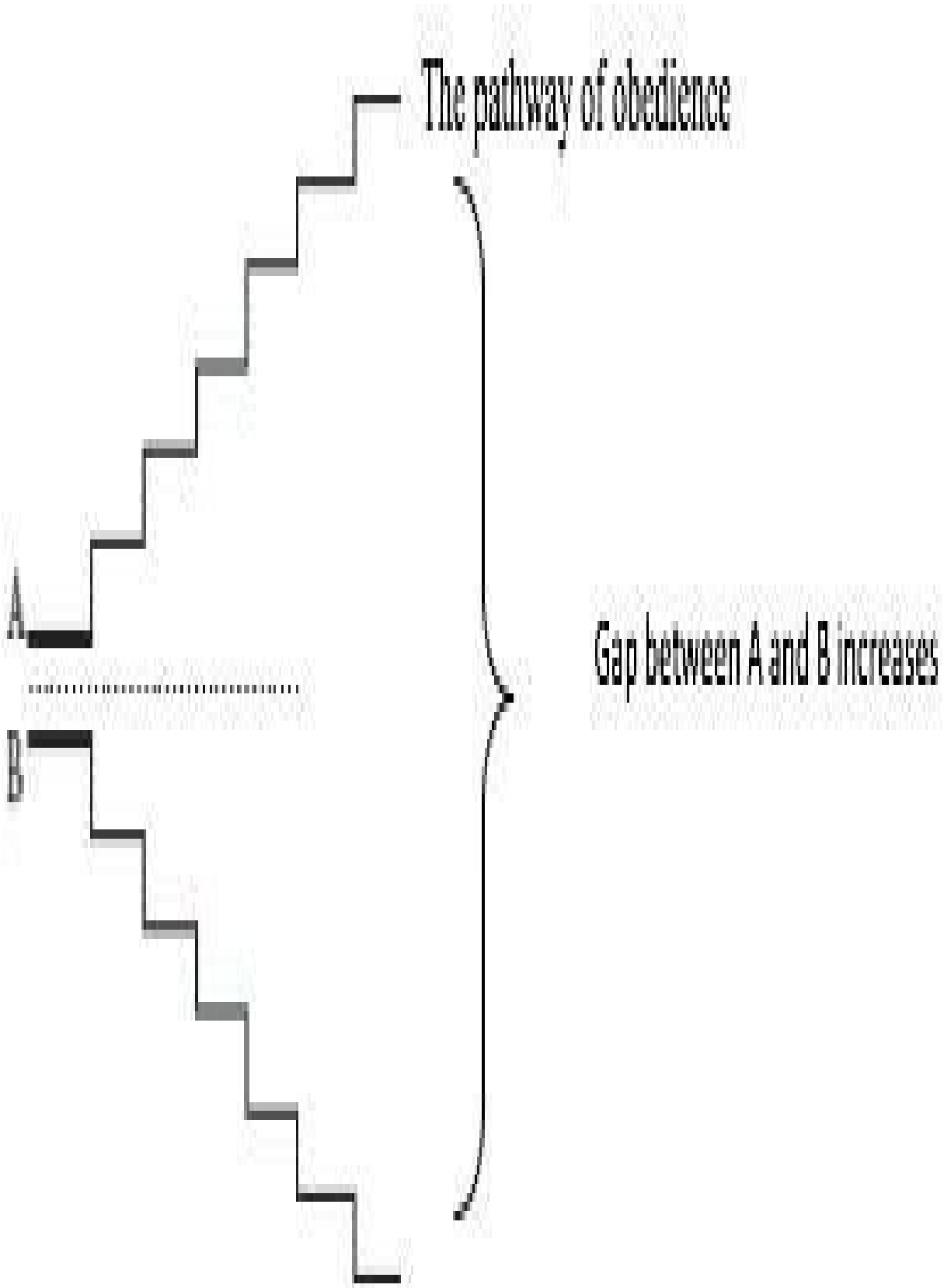
Conscience, Obedience And Progress

There can be no growth without obedience. Obedience is that which causes growth. When the light of the Lord begins to shine in a heart, the man begins to see the cobwebs. If he cleans them, more light comes in. Obedience to this new light means a step ahead.

When God tells you that you love the world and you resist it, the dirt of the love of the world increases and less and less light comes in. Someone told a beloved

brother, “Do not force your consecration on me. Allow me in my darkness.” His darkness had come to stay.

Let us take two believers, A and B. A is an obedient believer, but B is not. What happens to each of them as they either sin or obey is demonstrated in the diagram below:


The pathway of obedience
A
B
Gap between A and B increases

Each time A obeys, he does not stay put. He rises. Each time B disobeys, he does not stay put. He decreases.

As a person sins, he becomes more and more darkened. The things that used to trouble him do so no more. His former standards drop.

One person gathers the many things of the world but another is offended deeply by the same things of the world. One person is doing all to get rid of the things of the world but another person seeks them. As the person delivered from the love of the things of the world gets rid of them, light comes into his conscience and he grows spiritually. As the person bound by the world gets more and more of the world, his conscience darkens and he falls back spiritually. Consequently, these two people grow or fall in as much as they obey or disobey the Lord in His command not to love the world.

Knowledge And Conscience

Knowledge and the state of conscience go hand in hand. The conscience of some people does not disturb them because they do not have the light that is necessary for such disturbance. A girl in a tribe where a woman should have a child before marriage as prove of fertility will not find it a crime in her conscience if she has premarital sex with any man. In another tribe, a girl may never marry if she dares have a child out of wedlock. She is functioning in another scope of light. Her conscience will trouble her if she goes to bed with any man before marriage.

The Voice Of God And Conscience

When you face a situation, God speaks to you according to where you stand with Him at that moment. If instead of obeying, you go and ask other people, they will answer according to what they think is your standing with God at that time. Their appreciation may not be correct. God speaks to people according to where they stand with Him.

On the same issue, I will give one answer to a spiritual man and another to a carnal man. Once a beloved Brother and missionary wrote from the mission field to ask me whether he should receive the gift of a car that was being offered him. Because of his spiritual standing, and the fact that he had relatively just started, I told him not to take it. It would have meant the burial of his national missionary movement. The others in leadership would start wanting cars as well, since a spiritual man will be imitated.

Faced with opposition from those around on an issue Martin Luther had received light about, he said, “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of scripture or by the clearest reasoning passages quoted, unless the passages render my conscience bound, I cannot. It is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. May God help me.” What have you done with the light you received from God, faced with human opposition? Did you rather violate your conscience? What have you made your conscience into? You may need to repent.

Conscience will always attach itself to the highest knowledge you have. Once you have received new light from God, you may stifle or even quench, or defile your conscience. It will remain on the grounds of the new light received and judge you on those new grounds. What you do with the new light will determine whether you have a pure, clear or good conscience afterwards.

Good Works And Dead Works

The conscience of an unbeliever, though working, is dead. This is because his conscience is not working according to God. In the scriptures, all that does not function in relation to God is dead.

Since conscience relates to the light received, an unbeliever can have a very enlightened conscience in relation to man. But since it is not in relation to God, it is dead. Good works are the workings of the Holy Spirit in a believer. Dead works are the good works that the flesh has produced. Only that which has its origin in God by the Holy Spirit has standing before God.

All

preaching,

giving, and

sacrifice

which are not of the Holy Spirit are dead works.

All that is of the Holy Spirit in

origin,

course, and

consummation

are good works.

If something does not originate in the Holy Spirit, and is not led by the Holy Spirit to the finish, it cannot be of God. Let me say it again; all that is not authored, and directed to consummation by the Holy Spirit is a work of the flesh, a dead work. There are therefore dead gifts,

sermons,

mission fields,

choices for marriage,

children born,

etc..

All that is chosen in the flesh is chosen in death. May this truth produce in you a man led by the Spirit. Are you led by:

your mind,

your will,

your emotions or

by the Holy Spirit?

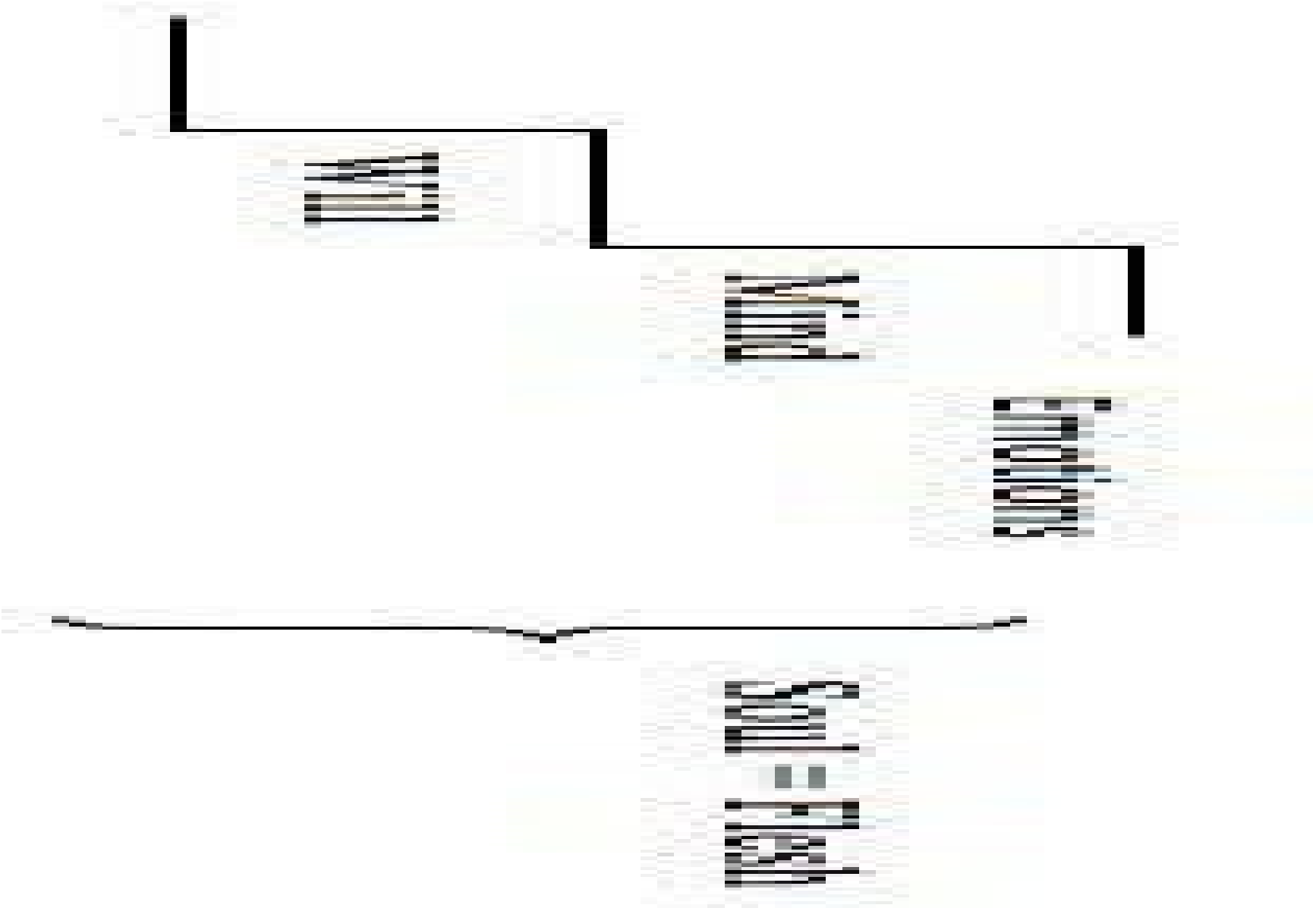
The carnal believer is the one who is led by his flesh;

will,

mind,

emotions.

We may represent this as below:



We are told to walk by the Spirit and not according to the flesh. The unbeliever walks by his

mind,

will,

emotions.

The carnal man is actually an “animal.” He is spiritually cut away from God as are the animals!

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE V

Conscience And Faith I

Without faith, you cannot have a clear conscience. The Lord offers you a position of faith and says, I am the God who heals you. You are sick, and know what He said. But, you also have money, so you run to the doctor. You have violated your conscience, by going away from the light you have received. You have distrusted God and put your trust in money.

God has told you, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” Philippians 4: 6). You have needs, but would not pray for God to provide them. You turn cheaply right or left and ask from men. Carnal help destroys and hurts the conscience of the one who knows he ought not to receive it.

Let me ask you, when you help people, is it Spirit-led, or the fruit of your mind, of your emotions and will? It will paralyse the person. How many persons have you paralysed by your carnal help? The Holy Spirit says, “Rebuke this person”, you say no, you are gentle, and the person is not corrected, and becomes paralysed. You have done harm.

When you look at a girl, do you look at what God has done in her or what her muscles are? Do you look at her diploma or at her intuition as formed by the

Holy Spirit? Do you look at Jesus' diploma? The following are some of the diplomas God gives:

Death to self (DTS).

Loyal to God and man (LTGAM).

Moving God Through Prayer (MGTP).

Deliverance from the love of the world (DFTLOTW).

Deliverance from the Love of the things of the world (DFTLOTTOTW).

Absolutely consecrated (AC).

Filled with the Holy Spirit (FWTHS)

Do you choose on the basis of Jesus' diplomas or on the basis of the diplomas of the world? Someone may have the world's doctorate and have none of Jesus' diplomas. Is that what you choose?

There are also the diplomas of the flesh:

Full of the self (FOTF)

Self-centred (SC)

Carried away by the beauty of the flesh (CABTBOTF)

Freed from discipline (FFD)

Freed from hard work (FFHW)

Full of moods (FOM)

Doctor of spending (DOS)

Love of the things of the world (LOTTOTW)

Love of the world (LOTW).

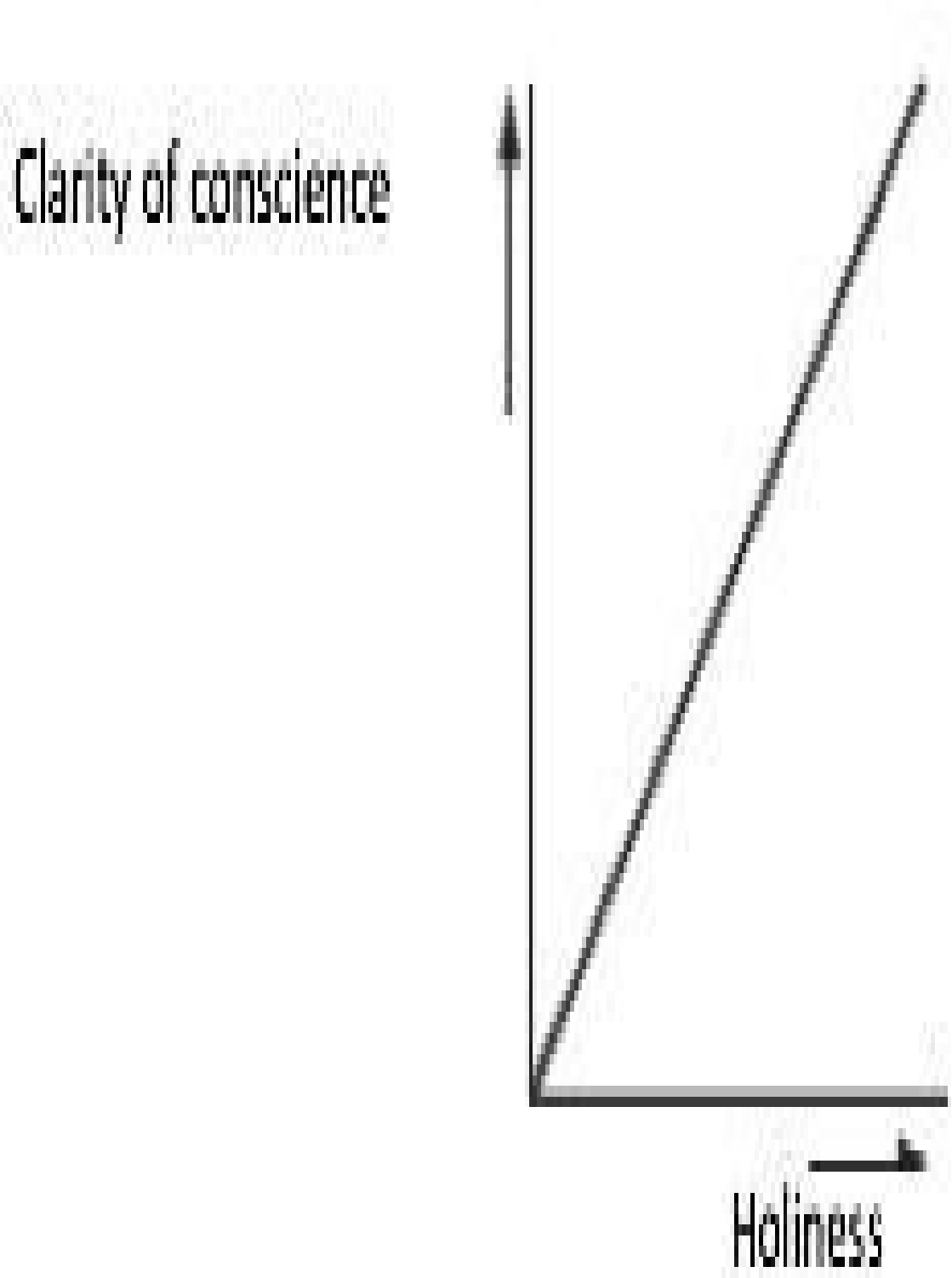
Which of these do you have? Be at war against them so that you may obtain the diplomas of God. Heaven does not know BTS, BA/BSc, MA, PhD, etc..

The Holy Spirit And Conscience

Because the purpose of God is that conscience should co-operate with the Holy Spirit, a man is greatly wanting if his conscience is closed to the convictions of the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, “When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement” (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit illuminates man’s conscience in order to bring in light and to save him. The Holy Spirit convicts a man of sin by the use of the law and then reveals the cross to him, so that the man may repent and be saved.

Conscience And Holiness

The clarity of conscience is directly proportional to holiness;


Clarity of conscience
Holiness

No holiness; no clarity of conscience.

Little holiness; little clarity of conscience.

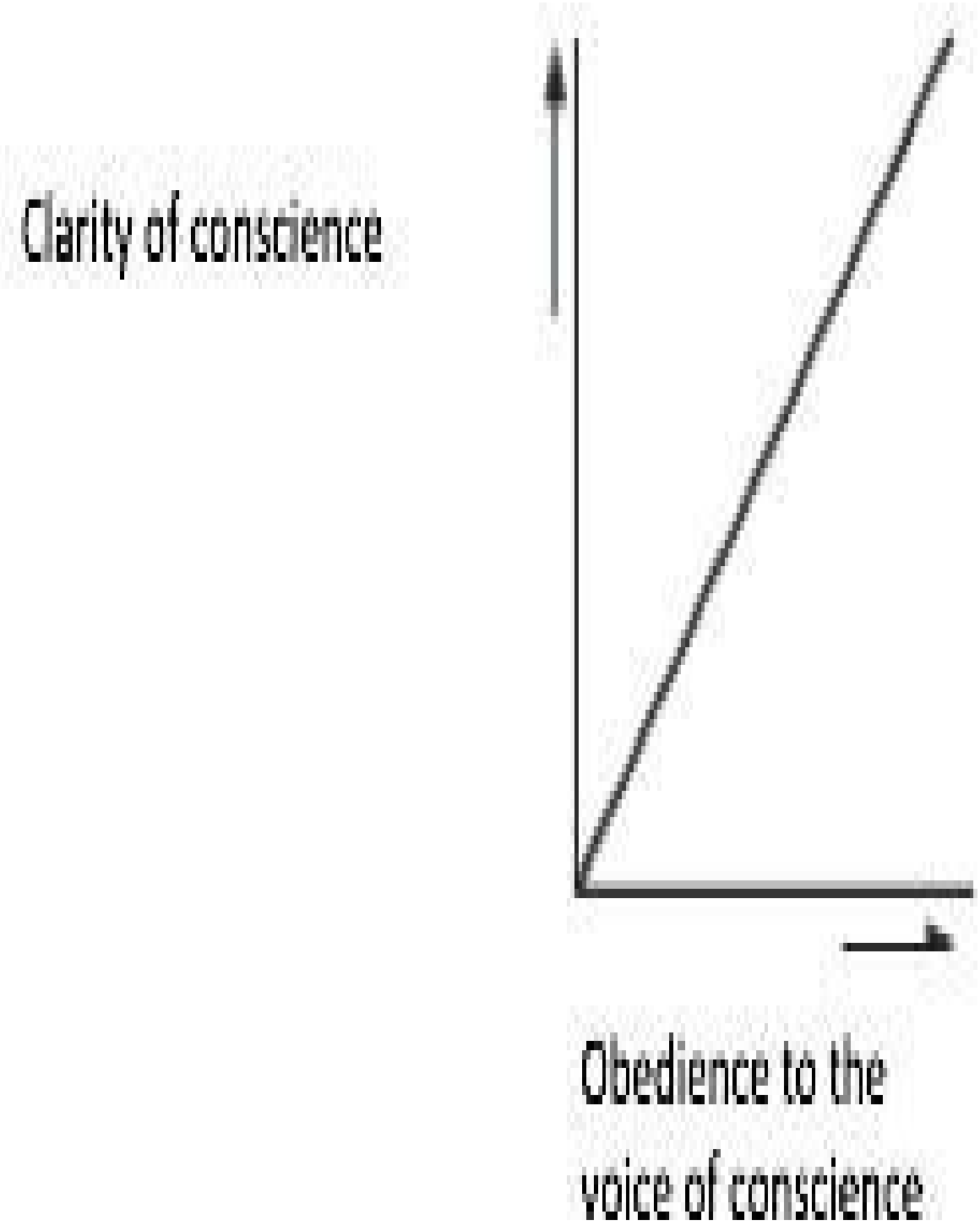
Great holiness; great clarity of conscience.

Holy people have a loud speaking conscience. The more holy a man is, the louder his conscience will speak. So that the one who walks with God will repent immediately, were he to sin. He cannot bear the voice of the loud speaking conscience for too long.

As a man sins more and more, the voice of conscience is heard less and less. He could later on sin and feel very normal. He has normalised sin, his heart strikes him no more.

Conscience And Obedience II

The conscience is also made clear by obedience to the voice of conscience. We represent it again as below:


Clarity of conscience
Obedience to the voice of conscience

The first voice of conscience is ever so loud, but when not heeded to, it becomes weaker and weaker. And, things are no longer seen clearly.

When Paul had not yet known the Lord Jesus Christ, he was obedient to his conscience. He said,

“I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them” (Acts25:9-ll).

Paul was fully faithful to his conscience. With a clear conscience he fought against Christ. He was convinced he had to do all to oppose the name of Jesus. He did all these with a good conscience until he got light and had to now act in accordance to that new light.

Conscience And A Man’s All

Anything less than a man’s all is disaster. The investment of anything less than a man’s all into Jesus Christ of Nazareth and the gospel is disaster. It is disaster to put less than your all into

prayer,

fasting,

suffering and

sacrificing

for the gospel. To put in anything less than one's all is criminal. It produces guilt. What we need most is the desire to give more to God.

The All-Good Conscience

An all-good conscience is the possession of all those who convert their convictions into action. It comes with the conversion of the total conviction into action. All that the conscience says become acts.

Paul as an unbeliever responded to the highest level of knowledge he had. He worked out the practical implications of the knowledge that he had. He translated his convictions into action.

In his obsession against the believers he went to Jerusalem against them. Then he met Jesus and in a total way proclaimed the gospel at all cost to himself. He put in his all according to his conscience.

He said,

"Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's

descendants? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this). I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked" (2 Corinthians 11:22-27).

Ours is not the gospel of people who do not want to suffer. Today, the devil has created a cross-less gospel. A gospel of people who live well and dress well, of people who do not suffer. Yet they read the Bible verse that says,

"To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless" (1 Corinthians 4:11).

Do you think and plan for more clothes? The apostles were in rags. Do you want to have the best housing? If you have not set your mind to suffer and sacrifice all for the gospel, then you have missed it totally. The king of missionaries is the king of suffering and sacrifice.

Are you the one who sees perishing men but live in abundance? You live at ease and wonder why there is no fruit. Have you settled to suffer in your

work,

sleep,

praying,

fasting,

reading,

dressing,

daily dynamic encounters with God,

etc.?

Is your whole life stamped with suffering? If not, you are a Judas.

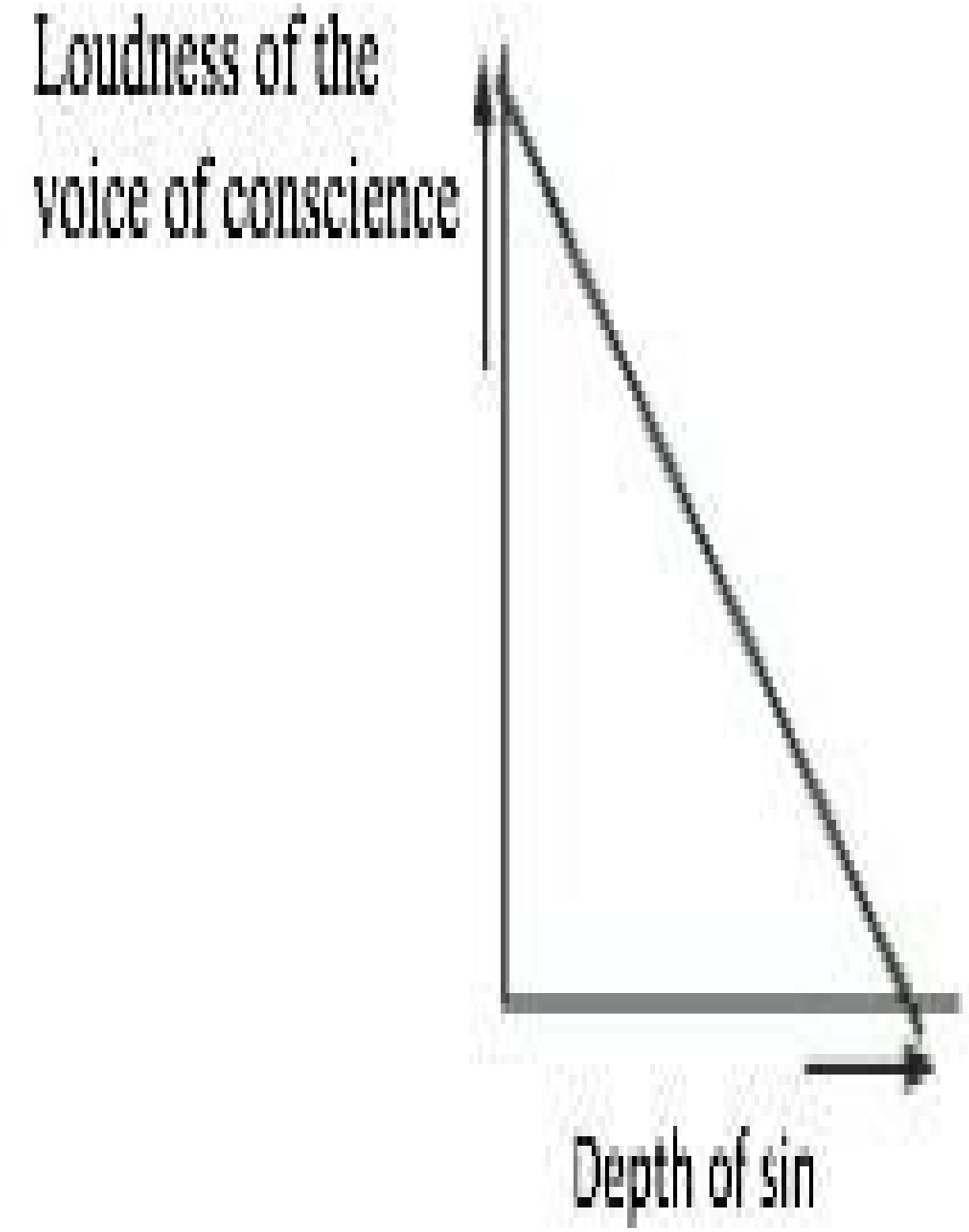
Some missionaries go and look for lofty housing in the mission field. The Father prepared a stable for His Son - for the creator of the universe. The missionary's house should resemble the model of the stable. Was heaven out of senses when Jesus was lodged in the stable?

Have you systematically run away from suffering? Why? Some people cannot walk a few metres on foot. They must go by car. They are traitors of the gospel. They cannot have a clear conscience before the Christ who suffered and died for them.

Is there anything you have denied yourself? The more things you have, the less you can get to the heights. Can an eagle be overloaded and yet reach the skies? Would you correct all that is there to be corrected?

Conscience And Depth Of Sin Committed

The loudness of the voice of conscience is indirectly proportional to the greatness of a man’s sin. Those who plunged very much into sin in the world live as though with a seared conscience even when in Christ.


Loudness of the
voice of conscience
Depth of sin

An unbeliever who committed a few sins and one who plunged into the deep things of sin are not at the same level when both believe. The one who committed more sin has to do with a darker conscience. He will know more spiritual limitations than the one who did not plunge as much into sin.

The more sin a sinner commits, the closer he will be to Satan in hell. Those who have sinned the most, will be the closest to Satan in hell. Similarly, in heaven, believers will not be at the same proximity to Jesus. Some will be very close to Him and some very far away from Him.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE VI

Conscience And Hearing God

Conscience and intuition work together with communion. The conscience functions as the window through which the light of God comes in. Since conscience is the window, and intuition the function of non-factual knowledge, there is no knowledge of God when the conscience is dark. The man with a dark conscience cannot hear God. Sin cuts off the light. Sin indeed cuts off the

Light,

Words,

Thoughts, and

Desires

of God so that the person becomes insensitive.

To desire what Jesus would not have desired is to desire wrongly.

To do that which Jesus would not have done is to do wrong.

To say that which Jesus would not have said is to speak wrongly.

To own that which Jesus would not have owned is to do wrong.

To spend that which Jesus would not have spent is to do wrong. When such things are done, then God may not be heard. Such things soil the conscience.

Conscience And The Preaching Of The Gospel

In the preaching of the gospel, the preacher aims at the conscience of the sinner and demands a verdict. The proclamation of the gospel is to bring people to a decision. A certain pastor spent the week studying the sins of his people and on Sunday he caricatured them and produced good results.

People are hardly saved when you preach the love of God to them. They believe when the sermon, troubles them. The proclamation of the gospel is warring at people’s consciences. Do your sermons trouble anyone? Who hates you because of your gospel? Does your presence trouble notorious sinners?

Conformity To Christ

It is of utmost importance that a believer resembles the Lord Jesus in what He

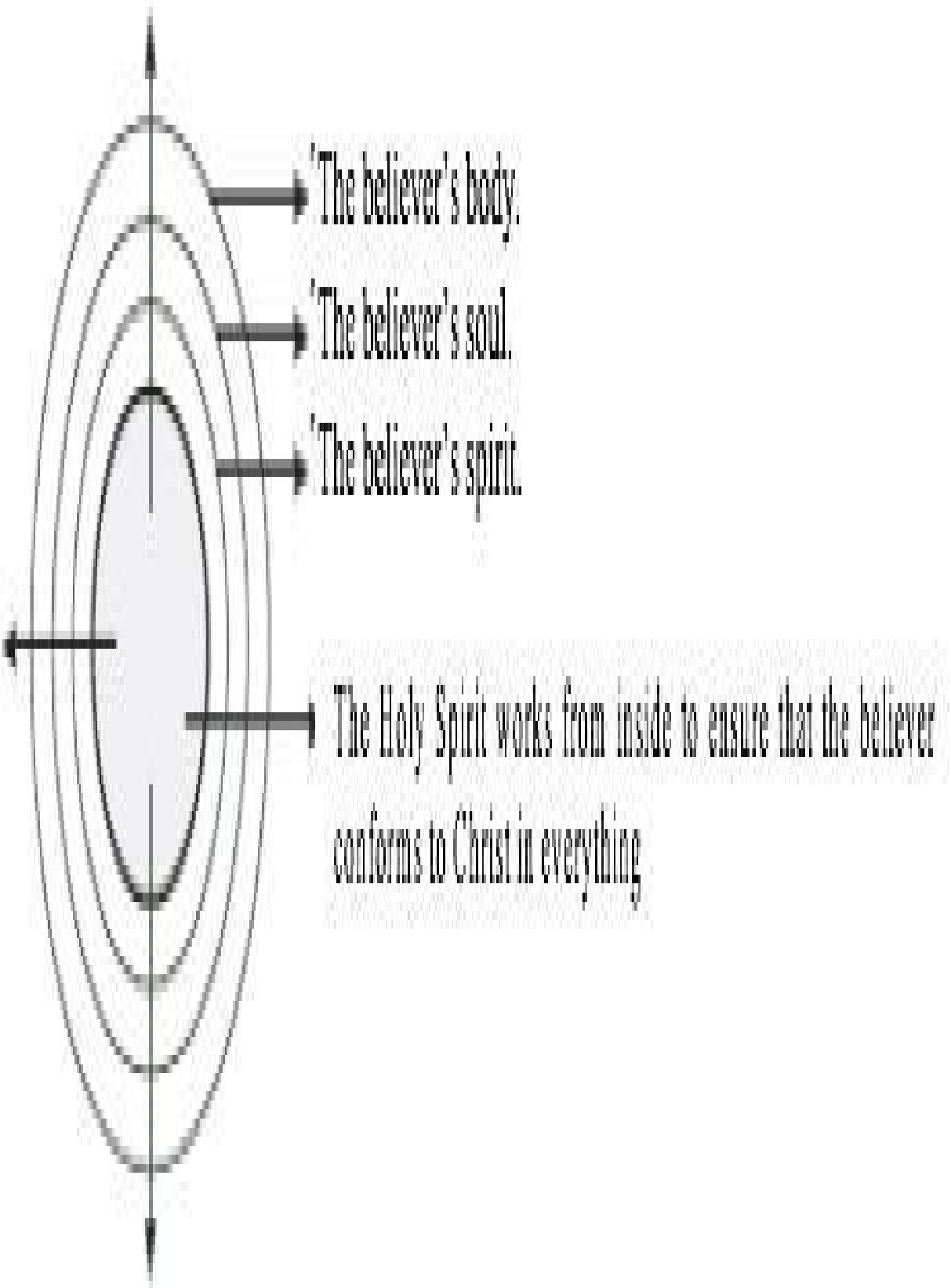
thought,

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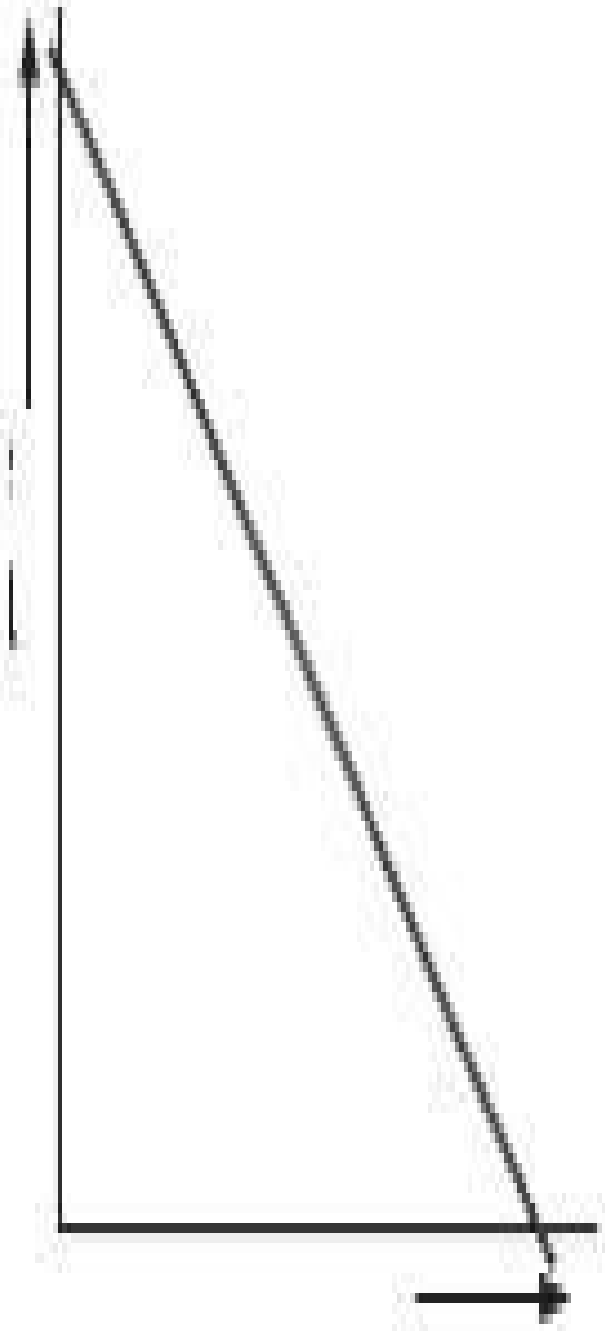
possessed.

This resemblance will lead to the believer's conformity to the Lord Jesus in being and doing. This is part of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. From inside, the Holy Spirit works to ensure that the believer is more and more like the Lord Jesus in everything.


The believer's body.
The believer's soul.
The believer's spirit.
The Holy Spirit works from inside to ensure that the believer conforms to Christ in everything

When a person sins, his conscience troubles him. If he continues to sin, his conscience troubles him less and less. There comes a time when he sins and is at peace even though there is a barrier between himself and God.

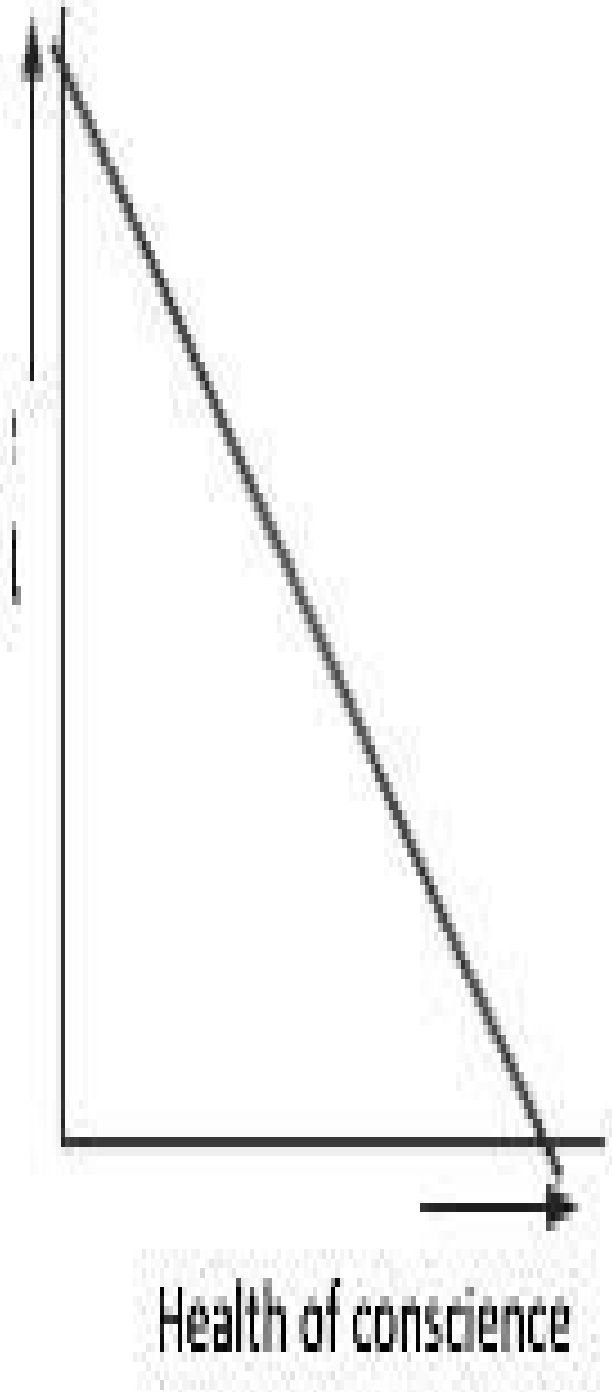
Extent to which Conscience is troubled because of sin committed



Time when sin is committed

The man is not troubled, but is lost. He has lost spiritual sensitivity. He is sick in his conscience.

Extent to which Conscience is troubled because of sin committed



When someone is sick in his conscience, he is less troubled in his conscience for sin committed. When someone is healthy in his conscience, his conscience troubles him for sin committed. He is even troubled at the thought of sin.

I want to say — to commit sin, whatever it is, is disaster. It is impossible to be the same afterwards. Sin affects everything else about the person who commits it. Sin is an action which must produce a reaction of far reaching consequences.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE VII

The Dubious Consent Of Conscience

Robert Watson said: “Half of the wrong things men do are not in spite of conscience, but with its dubious consent.”

Consider the following examples;

Your conscience says no but you do not stop. You know it is “No” but ask again. Then your conscience compromises.

Your leader says no on a certain issue, and your conscience agrees, but you gather proof to convince him. Soon your conscience begins to accept the stand of your reasons.

You know a certain action is wrong. Your conscience beats against it. You look at the gains and find reason to do it all the same. You calm your conscience on the matter and it consents. This is how many go wrong.

Let us take a Biblical example,

“Then the Israelites travelled to the plains of Moab and camped along the

Jordan across from Jericho. Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, and Moab was terrified because there were so many people. Indeed, Moab was filled with dread because of the Israelites. The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at the time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Boer, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said: A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed'

The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination. When they came to Balaam, they told him what Balak had said. "Spend the night here," Balaam said to them, "and I will bring you back the answer the Lord gives me." So the Moabite princes stayed with him. God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?" Balaam said to God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent me this message: 'A people that has come out of Egypt covers the face of the land. Now come and put a curse on them for me. Perhaps then I will be able to fight them and drive them away." But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed." The next morning Balaam got up and said to Balak's princes, "Go back to your own country, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you." So the Moabite princes returned to Balak and said, "Balaam refused to come with us" (Numbers 22:1-14).

This was God's position, and Balaam knew it so well.

"Then Balak sent other princes, more numerous and more distinguished than the first. They came to Balaam and said: "This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Do not let anything keep you from coming to me, because I will reward you handsomely and do whatever you say. Come and put a curse on these people for me." But Balaam answered them, "Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the Lord my God. Now stay here tonight as the others did, and I will

find out what else the Lord will tell me" (Numbers 22:14 - 19).

This was already a position of compromise. How did he think the God of Israel was going to change His mind up to the point of cursing His people whom He had blessed? The promise of Balak and the worldly composition of his team did mean much to Balaam. He thought the God of Israel could change His mind. His conscience had begun to wobble.

"That night God came to Balaam and said, "Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you." (Numbers 22: 20).

God was beginning to give him the evil desire of his heart. His conscience was now at peace with his going with the people. He was having his way at last. What a way to have!

"Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him." (Numbers 22:21-22).

What else did Balaam expect after God had spoken? All that God said afterwards was spoken to a sick man. He had abandoned God. God was angry with him. He was asking God to change His will. Here conscience has been stripped of its power to be the good guide.

Did you compromise with your parents and now you have a hardened conscience? Repent. Resistance to God quenches the conscience and makes it insensitive to God's word.

If your conscience is condemning you on some issue, you are in trouble. God condemns you more on the same issue. If the lower standard is already saying that you are wrong, what will the higher say? The Bible says,

"This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him" (1 John 3:19-23).

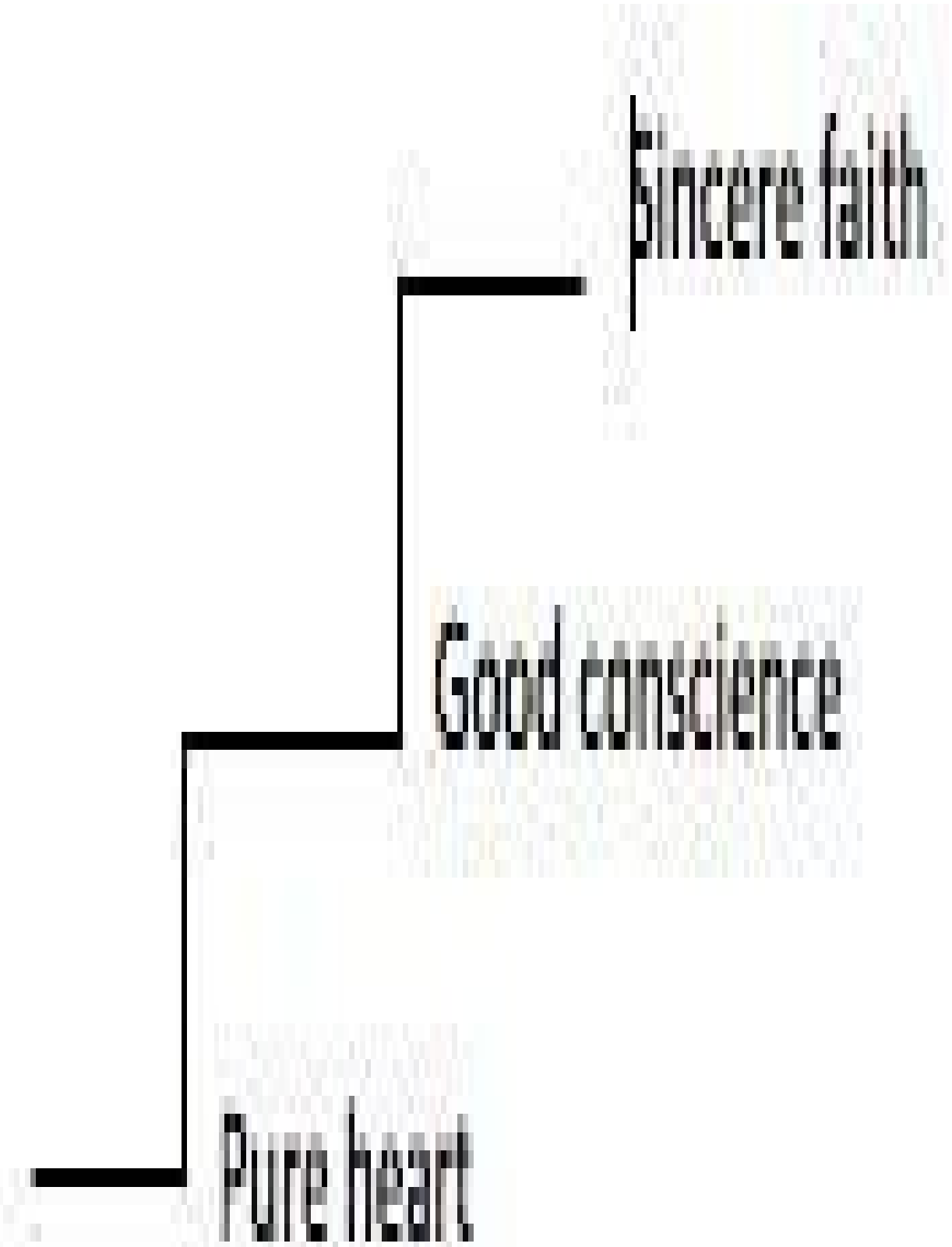
CONSCIENCE AND FAITH II

Many people come before God with an accusing conscience or with a silenced conscience. They cannot exercise faith because faith and a good conscience go hand in hand.

In Timothy Paul says,

"As I urged you when I went to Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work - which is by faith. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:3-5).

We have:


Sincere faith
Good conscience
Pure heart

A pure heart leads to a good conscience, which in turn leads to sincere faith. When there is no good conscience, faith is paralysed.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy he says,

"I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:3-5).

Conscience And One's Rights

When you defend your rights against the Spirit of the Lamb, you lose. Many want to defend their rights of husband or wife. These darken the heart. Then with darkened hearts, they pray to a sealed heaven.

The church is yet to enter into her inheritance. But if now she fights for her rights, she can only have a conscience that is not pleasing to God.

Conscience And Company

Who are the three people who have influenced you the most these last ten years? Please name them:

1.

2.

3.

I was recently very disturbed when a spiritual leader wrote to me of the four people nearest to him. They were all worldly people, some of whom have rejected God and settled on the other side of the Jordan. They will whisper the world to this man.

When people backslide, they run away from holy company. Who is the object of your greatest admiration? At whose feet do you want to sit? Whom do you find excuses to loiter around? This describes you. It tells what you will be.

Like hearts yearn for one another. When a man has a problem, he first contacts his like of heart. When he has a joy, he first contacts his like of heart.

The person you want your children to build a relationship with is indicative of who you are. If your children reject holy men, you are the cause. You too resist them. You cannot cheat.

You can have a legal paper, binding both of you together, and yet be strangers because of disparity in levels of consecration. When consecration draws near or distances, relationships behave correspondingly.

The Limited Knowledge Of Conscience

Conscience does not know everything. Your conscience may approve of something, but which may be wrong. You do not have all the knowledge. The little you know, and which gives you a good conscience may be too limited. Paul said,

“I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me” (1 Corinthians 4:3-4).

We walk by the light brought in by conscience. This gives us freedom. But when God’s light comes in, we may then find that we were wrong. I can only say,

“This is what I see where I am now. When more light comes, things will be different.”

With limited light, I married together two divorced people. Later on as I got more light, I knew it ought never to have happened, and for no reason can it ever be done again. The Bible says,

“For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man” (Romans 7:2-3).

When one’s partner is still alive, it is adultery to marry another person. Marriage is ended only by death. Do not say you are burning. It is better to burn on earth emotionally than to burn in the flames of hell.

If the partner dies, the other may marry, even one day after the death. Let me take an example: In 1973-74 in Western Kenya, a woman was visiting and while there the wife of the man she was visiting died of a heart attack. Then God told her to marry the man and take care of the children. In two months, they were married.

I have never seen a marriage of divorced persons, which worked. It is adultery. In ‘Herald of His Coming’ there is the case of two married people who discovered only later on that they ought not to have been married. With this realisation, they lived together for the sake of the children, but they never torched each other’s bodies again.

Conscience And The Love Of Gain

There is a spirit of the love of gain and the love of the world that threatens to destroy many a Christian work. It is threatening our own work. This talks of a great lack in the knowledge of who the Lord our God is and the demands of the Christian life.

Let us take a Bible example to illustrate that God is able to provide far beyond the needs of His own people:

“Amaziah called the people of Judah together and assigned them according to their families to commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds for all

Judah and Benjamin. He then mustered those twenty years old or more and found that there were three hundred thousand men ready for military service, able to handle the spear and shield. He also hired a hundred thousand fighting men from Israel for a hundred talents of silver. But a man of God came to him and said, "O king, these troops from Israel must not march with you, for the Lord is not with Israel - nor with any of the people of Ephraim. Even if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow." Amaziah asked the man of God, "But what about the hundred talents I paid for these Israelite troops?" The man of God replied, "The Lord can give you much more than that." So Amaziah dismissed the troops who had come to him from Ephraim and sent them home. They were furious with Judah and left for home in a great rage. Amaziah then marshalled his strength and led his army to the Valley of Salt, where he killed ten thousand men of Seir" (2 Chronicles 25:5-11).

In verse nine we read, "Amaziah asked the man of God, "But what about the hundred talents I paid for these Israelite troops?" The man of God replied "The Lord can give you much more than that." Do you believe it? Or do you want to pursue the gain?

Beyond the certainty that God will be faithful in providing for His children, we strongly want to say that the pathway to heaven is loss, loss, and loss. If that is not the case with you, there will be trouble with your conscience.

Conscience And Self-Justification

People who are not prompt to repentance get hardened. They must of necessity be late in the plans of God for them. Self-justification is the worst that can befall a man. The self-justifying cannot repent. They will postpone repentance while the conscience is corroding from inside. Their capacity to receive revelation from God directly is damaged. When a man postpones repentance, what he

thinks to have received is always wrong. Such a person remains a spiritual baby.

The heart that repents immediately moves with the light of God. Those who do not repent immediately may after thirty years, make the progress of two years. Are you like that? Do you think you are being tough? Perhaps, a tough corpse!

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE VIII

The Seared Conscience

A seared conscience encourages a person when he is wrong but troubles him when he does right. It is the exact opposite of the normal. We read,

"The Spirit clearly says that in latter times, some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:2).

The man with a seared conscience is a hypocritical liar. Hypocrisy is the doorway to spiritual disaster. This consists in putting up a public show that is absent in private.

There is a brother with a wonderful wife. When she does the least wrong, he comes and tells me. But he never tells me when she does right. This is where King Saul was. He was running after David to kill him.

"Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and his father's whole family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. Saul said,

“Listen now, son of Ahitub.” “Yes, my lord,” he answered. Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and enquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?” Ahimelech answered the king, “Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king’s son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? Was that day the first time I enquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father’s family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair” (1 Samuel 22:11-15).

Saul was speaking the language of a seared conscience. Obviously, David was not rebelling against the king.

It was a seared conscience functioning in Portiphar’s wife when she presented Joseph’s clothes to prove that he was criminal. A seared conscience produces false reasons to justify evil. It is a seared conscience when an abortion is committed to hide adultery or fornication. About such the Bible says, “Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.” Most immoral women think tough of themselves, because of the number of men running after them.

There are people who when they have done good, they are troubled. Their light has been turned to darkness.

Conscience is the window that lets in light. As a person sins against the Lord, the window of conscience gets darker and darker. Finally it is all dark. That which pointed rightly now points in the opposite direction.

The terrible thing about the sinful heart is that the light of conscience turns to darkness. He does not say the conscience dies. I have heard talk of fathers who

congratulate their sons for sleeping all around with girls; they say their sons have become real men.

The Bible says,

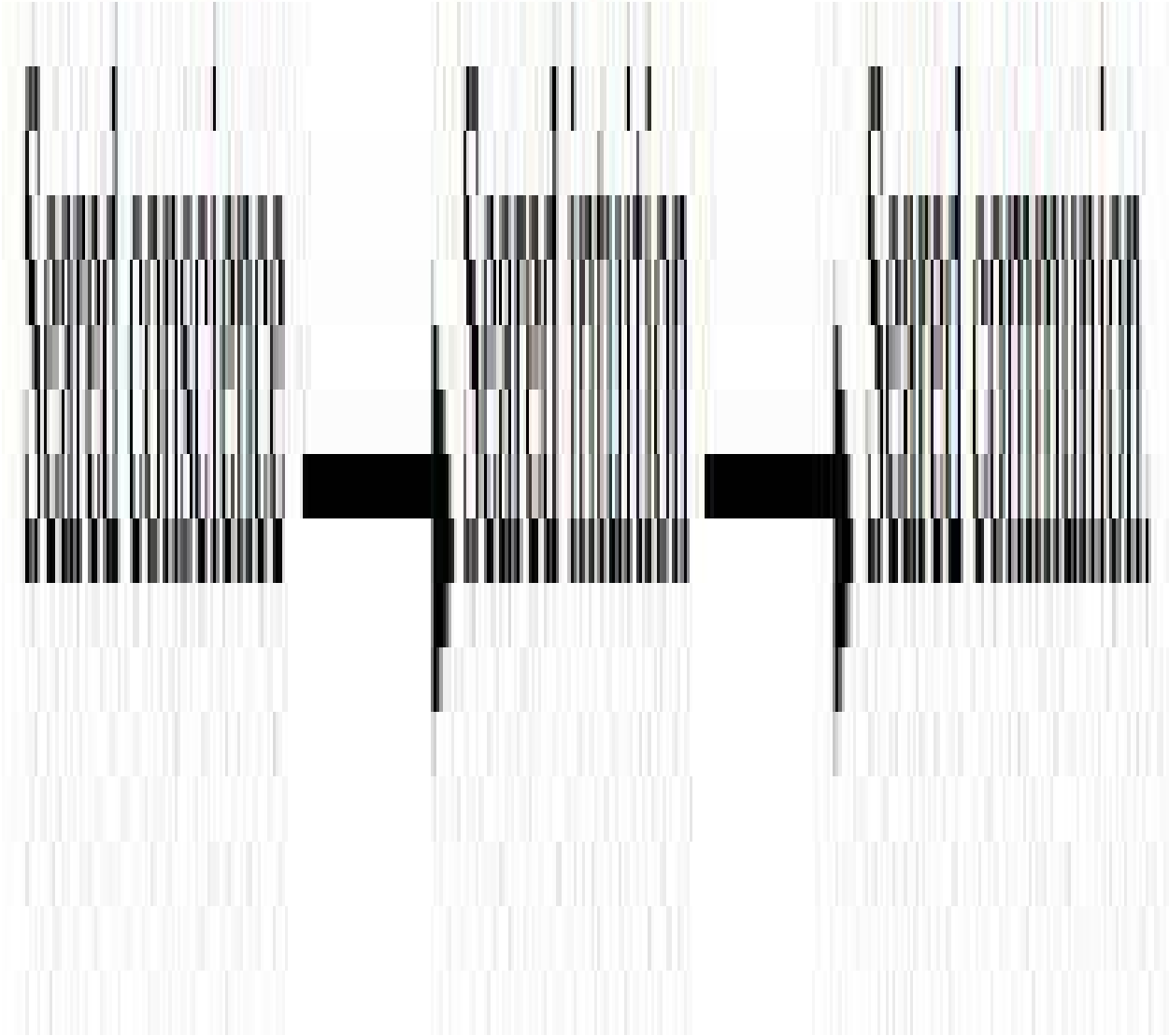
"... the eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:21-23).

Conscience can get to the place where it now serves the opposite purpose. A man prayed, "Thou God, who on earth made the blind to see, make the seeing to be blind when I reach the customs."

The seared conscience no longer calls sin, sin. It is rather disturbed by righteousness.

What causes a seared conscience? The refusal to be warned about sin. The refusal to take sin seriously.

The seared conscience does not hear God's voice. When they think to have heard, it is all erroneous. The intuition and communion of a seared conscience are damaged. The seared conscience leads to a seared intuition, and to a seared communion.



The seared conscience may think to be in a very good relationship with God. It is all mistaken.

On The Way To A Seared Conscience

The refusal to

pray,

read the Bible,

hate the world,

hate the things of the world and refrain from them,

hate the self,

will lead to a seared conscience.

The refusal to war against the self, to carry out restitution, to terminate with the past, etc.. will lead to a seared conscience. These may be done while expecting God to bless. Well, God may bless a sinner, but He does not condone with sin.

When a man covers sin, he is on his way to a seared conscience. Covering sin by zeal, leading of songs in the assembly, etc.. are sure ways to obtain a seared conscience.

“If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives” (1 John 1:6-10).

Practising sin and praying,

giving to God and

fasting

will lead to a seared conscience.

When some sin is being hidden, when the motives are wrong, the Christian activity of a man is a whitewashed sepulchre. John says,

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives” (1 John 1:10).

“Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6).

You do not need to commit very many sins. If you harden your heart in one area, darkness will overwhelm you.

When The Conscience Is Seared

Your sin is pointed out but you continue as if nothing was the matter.

You hate someone and know it, but confess love.

You sing songs and give your testimony but are living in sin.

You have lost God but will not own up.

You make plans to serve God in the future with a sinful past.

You want to build a sin-bridge that has since been broken.

It is not possible to be in fellowship with God while being in darkness with man. Some in such conditions may even undertake a prayer retreat. It is really not prayer. When the conscience is seared, in some areas the person may still be alive out of past learning. But he is out of phase with God.

A seared conscience is not disturbed by sin.

A seared conscience reacts in opposition to rebukes, could even laugh while being rebuked.

A man with a seared conscience is just superficial and light.

A man with a seared conscience knows only shallow confessions.

A man with a seared conscience will make excuses instead of confessing sin.

A man with a seared conscience will perform some hasty repentances.

A man with a seared conscience knows no sorrow, no anguish. A man with a

seared conscience will not stop the sin he says he has repented of.

A man with a seared conscience will expect God to bless and foster that which was started in sin.

A man with a seared conscience knows no radical forsaking of sin.

A man with a seared conscience knows no broken and contrite heart.

A man with a seared conscience divides sin into small and big sins.

A man with a seared conscience tolerates pride but says fornication is terrible.

A man with a seared conscience says if a man goes to bed with a woman, not his wife, it is terrible, but he allows an immoral thought.

A man with a seared conscience minds more about his reputation.

A man with a seared conscience has his glory as his goal.

A man with a seared conscience may not be rebuked in public.

A man with a seared conscience has made up his mind to go his own way.

A man with a seared conscience seeks Bible verses to justify his sin.

A man with a seared conscience looks for bad examples to copy.

A man with a seared conscience will explain his worldliness; his love of the world, and of the things of the world.

A man with a seared conscience does not seek to know God.

A man with a seared conscience finds the Bible boring.

A man with a seared conscience does not want to pray alone.

A man with a seared conscience cannot pray alone.

A man with a seared conscience is frightened by the presence of God.

A man with a seared conscience lives in the memories of the past.

The Example of King Saul

Saul started very well. Then Samuel told him,

“Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. I will surely come down to you to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, but you must wait seven days until I come to you and tell you what you are to do” (1 Samuel 10:8).

While Samuel was yet to come,

“The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Michmash, east of Beth Aven. When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns. Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear. He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul’s men began to scatter. So he said, “Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.” And Saul offered up the burnt offering. Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him. “What have you done?” asked Samuel. Saul replied, “When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash, I thought, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the Lord’s favour.’ So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering” (2 Samuel 13:5-12).

He got impatient. Then he started lying.

When Samuel rebuked him,

“Saul replied, “I have sinned. But honour me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord your God.” So Samuel went back with Saul, and Saul worshipped the Lord” (1 Samuel 15:30-31).

He had sinned, but wanted honour before the elders and the people of Israel. He was out to gain favour. Later he became jealous of David.

Even though he had wiped out the mediums, he is to consult one of them:

“Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own town of Ramah, Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land. The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all the Israelites and set up camp at Gilboa. When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. He enquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. Saul then said to his attendants, “Find me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go and enquire of her.” “There is one in Endor,” they said. So Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothes, and at night he and two men went to the woman. “Consult a spirit for me,” he said, “and bring up for me the one I name.” But the woman said to him, “Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?” Saul swore to her by the Lord, “As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this.” Then the woman asked, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” “Bring up Samuel,” he said. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, “Why have you deceived

me? You are Saul (1 Samuel 28:3-12).

Heaven was sealed for him, then he asked to find a medium. Before, he exterminated the mediums, now he is the leader in consulting one of them. Once you hated and forsook a certain sin. Now you love and lead the committing of it. Your conscience is seared.

Saul ends up committing suicide. He played with sin.

The Example Of David

David too functioned with a seared conscience:

"He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself; David and his men were far back in the cave. The men said, "This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 1 will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish'." Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. Afterwards, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. He said to his men. "The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord." With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way" (1 Samuel 24:3-7).

David was conscience-stricken because of what he had done to Saul.

At another time, we are told,

“Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped round him. David then asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab’s brother, “Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?” “1 will go with you,” said Abishai. So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying round him. Abishai said to David, “Today God has given your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won’t strike him twice.” But David said to Abishai, “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless? As surely as the Lord lives,” he said, “the Lord himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let’s go.” So David took the spear and water jug near Saul’s head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep.” (1 Samuel 26:5-12).

This act was not any different from the first when his conscience smote him.

When he takes away the spear and jug this time, his conscience does not strike him. His conscience had degraded. Later, on, he is to commit adultery. And with that he would not repent. He rather wanted to make the man lie with his wife so he may think the child was his. Failing there, he killed Uriah in order to cover his sin. When people do not deal deeply and radically with sin they do themselves untold damage.

David kept carrying out the duties of his office without repentance. Here was the singer-worshipper of Israel; the man whose heart panted after God, yearned after

the Lord, who made massive sacrifices. He would not deal radically with sin. Indulgence comes in and he does not go to war. He ends an adulterer and murderer. His conscience is seared.

He would not repent of the following sins he had committed:

Indulgence in not going to war.

Committing adultery with Bathsheba.

Weakening the army by withdrawing a key soldier, Uriah, from war,

Making Uriah drunk.

Sending Uriah to his death.

He continued with a seared conscience, until Nathan came in. Curiously, when Nathan told him the story, he was angry with the man who did such a thing. A seared conscience is capable of such.

Can A Seared Conscience Be Healed?

Can a seared heart be healed? - Yes.

By true repentance.

The following are the steps to repentance according to God.

See sin as God sees it:

Know godly sorrow.

Confess sin in totality, hiding nothing.

Turning away from sin totally.

Carrying out restitution totally.

Seeking forgiveness.

Receiving forgiveness.

Seeking restoration.

Receiving restoration.

Where are you? Unless you repent, no amount of religious activity will help you. You cannot make spiritual progress. You begin to function in the soul - emotion, mind, will. All about the spirit and that which relates to eternal life is lost for you.

I have made mistakes about the things I thought myself. But there is not one thing I heard from God, which proved wrong. There are times I have changed my mind because of pressures around or because of my own unwillingness. Then God spoke in His permissive will. But when it has come to action I would go the way of God’s original message. I have no doubts as to what God has told me, not one doubt.

I have not had a retreat place for long. The room I could use, God had told me not to use it because it was meant for something else. If I go on retreat there today, I will not hear God. I will be in the wrong place.

God has asked us to send ten missionaries to Russia. We shall not send less. There is the tendency to disobey, but the consequences are beyond telling. We shall obey.

Do you have anything worrying you in your conscience now? If nothing, it could likely be the testimony of a seared conscience. The alternative is that you have satisfied God in all that He requires of you. Let me ask again - Is anything wrong with your conscience?

Dead Inside, Active Outside

You can be very active in the physical, whereas deep inside you are dead. You can be dancing with all your might, but inside, you are dead, you long parted company with God. My counsel is this - when you have lost God from inside, do nothing externally. Do not be concerned about what people think of you. Very soon it will mean nothing.

Facing The Issues

You may have to examine your life in the light of the following:

Fortune

Females

Fame

Food

Falsehood

Faithlessness

Freedom.

Are you keeping what you should give away? It means that you are open to things. When you keep what God has told you to give away, communion with God is cut. Have you cheated in relation to what you ought to give God? Your heart cannot be given to Him.

Is there sin in

motive,

desire,

thought,

looks,

touch,

feeling,

taste,

value,

Word,

Doing,

possession

that you know about but are yet unrepentant of?

Are you hurt when your sin is exposed in public? Fame is tied around the self. Self-love and self-exaltation are more ugly and cause distancing away from God more than anything else. The lifting of self is terrible idolatry. It is an attempt to overthrow God.

You may not be a public figure, but the desire for self-preservation is great. You seek God for personal glory. You may not want the praise of others, but you praise yourself. Is that where your problems is? The first murder in the Bible was because of glory. After it, there have been many such.

Have you asked - why you are serving God? May your eyes be opened to the fact that

self,

self-love,

self-exaltation,

self-exhibition,

etc.

are idolatrous.

If you find that your conscience is seared, we recommend our book “True Repentance” so that you may know what repentance is. Then you can go before God and let Him show you your sin. Take a pen, write them down, repent and forsake them.

Sit before God and let Him point out to you the lies of your life. Same for theft, pride, etc..

Conscience shows things with exactitude. It does not treat things in general. So, be specific in your confession of sin. Sins in attitude are grievous before God. A wrong attitude is a grievous thing before God.

The thing with sin is that one must deal with it immediately. Once conscience points out a thing agree with it immediately and repent. If you keep quiet, you have missed an opportunity. You now have a double barrier to deal with. Do not wait for anything to be finished before you repent. Do it there and then.

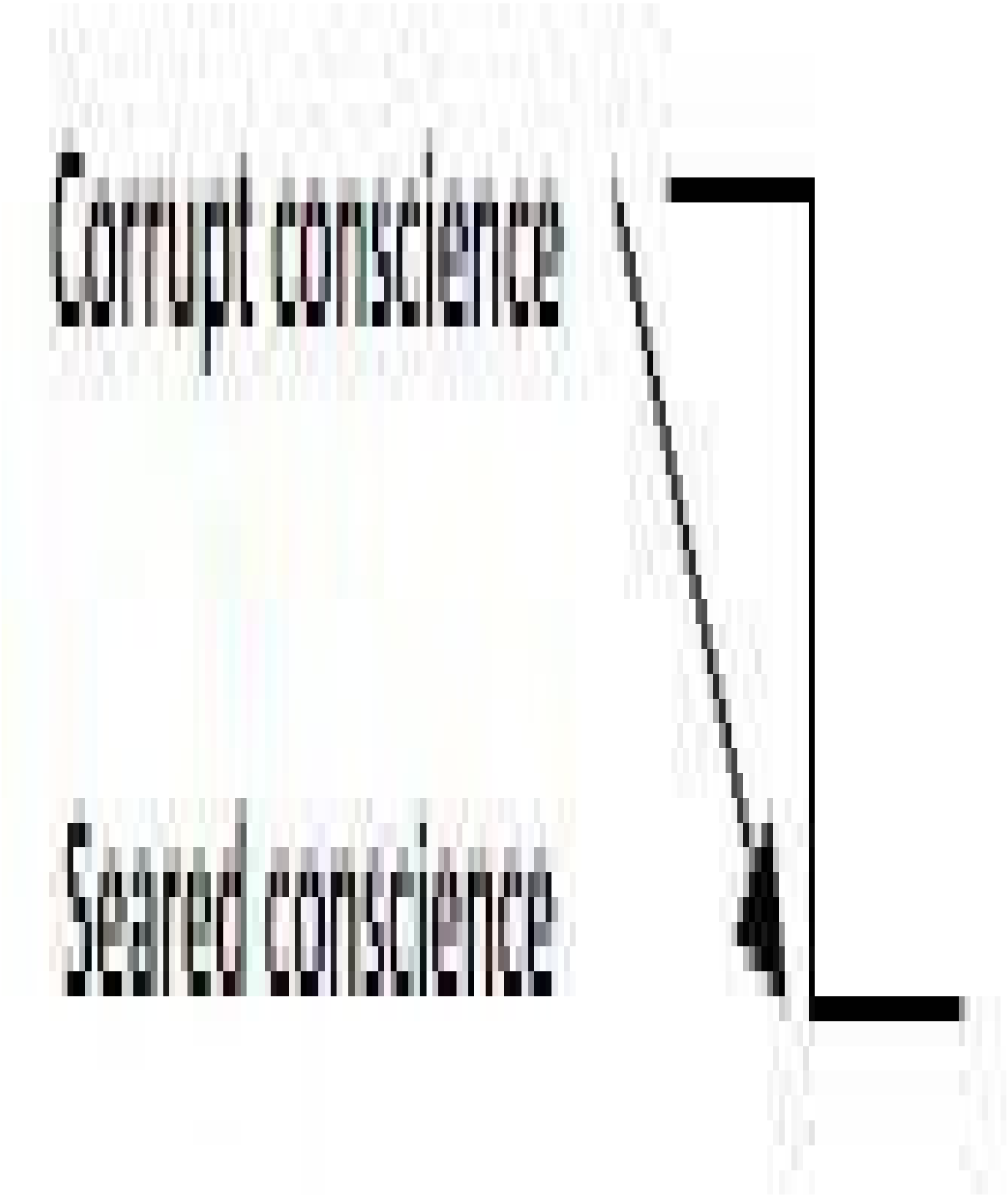
The normal thing is that you put things right with God and then with man.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE IX

The Corrupt Conscience

In the corrupt conscience, the actions deny God. God is not called bad, but the actions testify thus.

Before the conscience is seared, it may pass through the stage of being corrupt.


Corrupt conscience
Seared conscience

We read,

“For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach - and that for the sake of dishonest gain. Even one of their own prophets has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth. To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good” (Titus 1:10-16).

Verse fifteen reads, “To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.’’ Such a conscience will twist the facts to justify its action. There are believers who no longer believe what they do not want to obey. They claim to know God but their actions testify to the contrary.

Conscience And The Impact Of One’s Life

Oswald Smith said,

if you send a carnal missionary,

if you send a worldly missionary,

if you send a consecrated missionary,

if you send a spiritual missionary,

after five years you will go and find a

carnal,

worldly,

consecrated,

spiritual

church respectively.

A man will only impart what there is in him. He will not impart what he preaches. What is communicated is a man’s life. It is not a man’s external acts that will alter another man from inside.

For example, take a carnal man, name him missionary, a provincial leader, etc., nothing will change in the impact of his life. If you do, you have only increased the sphere over which he can spread his carnality.

A forty-day fast will not alter what I am. The Bible read over will not alter what I am. I say this because there is the temptation to hold to externals. You can copy some person’s message, but it will only leave the impact of your own life. The sad thing is that people are not working on the inside.

Conscience And Suffering

I cannot be different from the extent to which I have suffered for the Lord. “In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering” (Hebrews 2:10). It is sacrifice that changes the inner man. And how people hate it! Many spend their lives avoiding suffering. God did not make things easy for the apostles. In no domain did He make things easy because ease and inward development are mutually exclusive.

When you

eat,

sleep,

and are comfortable,

you cannot become spiritual. The narrow way is the way of

sacrifice,

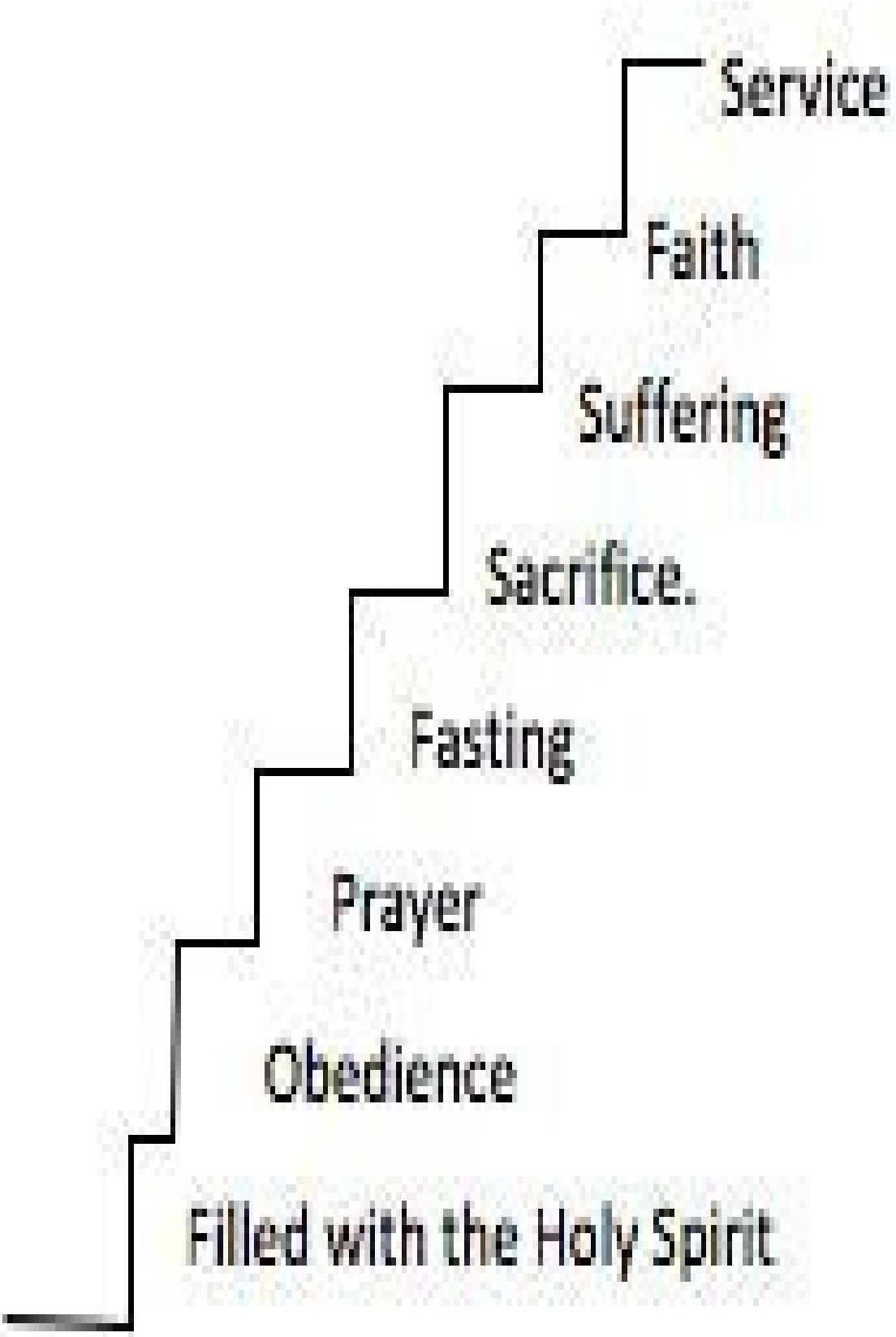
suffering,

renunciation

of the world’s glory and of the things of the world.

This is the pathway to spiritual progress. Those who suffer cease from the glory of the flesh. The overcomers know self-imposed suffering.

We recommend the following pathway:


Service
Faith
Suffering
Sacrifice.
Fasting
Prayer
Obedience
Filled with the Holy Spirit

The man who is always asking for the most comfortable way is doomed never to be spiritual. Look at Jesus, our model. He became the pioneer of our faith through suffering. When a man who has suffered for the gospel prays, and another at ease prays, the prayer of one reaches God, the other's does not.

The more things you have, the less straight your inner life becomes. When you have more money, you can give it to God or buy another shirt. You can go by taxi or on foot. You can walk on foot and produce fifteen more gospel tracts with the taxi money or not. You can sleep another hour, or wake up and pray. Each of these things depends on you and determines your spiritual growth.

In the next twenty years, we shall all be very different. The suffering and the indulgent shall not be able to meet again.

What I am inside, is what has been worked out by the Holy Spirit, in response to my suffering and sacrifice.

The Lord warns,

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence" (Matthew 23:25).

Inside, full of greed and self-indulgence. Are you fundamentally indulgent? You cannot do anything for God. All what you may do is wood, hay, stubble.

Paul says,

“To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world” (1 Corinthians 4:11-13).

Furthermore,

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

The apostle was afraid that he might be disqualified from the prize. Are you afraid?

Many people think about Paul’s distinction without thinking about his suffering. They want his position without his suffering. They want glory without the price. Listen to what he says of himself,

“Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I

have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised for ever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me. But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands" (2 Corinthiens 11:23-33).

Wanting the price without the sacrifice; the reward without suffering is being corrupt. It can only produce a corrupt conscience.

Many believers relax, but want the glory. Some have reached a place in their walk with God where they can no longer be provoked. They want a

big ministry,

spiritual promotion,

to move God,

etc.

without sacrifice.

The Guilty And Corrupt Conscience

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22).

“To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted” (Titus 1:15).

Many want to silence their condemning consciences by noise and explanations and justifications. With this kind of activity the conscience becomes corrupted and seared.

Once, a man committed adultery with a woman. His conscience troubled him and troubled him. After some time he said, the woman was lonely and he had only reached out to her. He later convinced himself to have done holy duty to her. There comes a time, the Lord said, when those who kill believers will think they are doing God good.

When the conscience is defiled, and proclaims someone guilty, but the person justifies or postpones repentance, the conscience will get down to being seared. If you walk with God, the slightest violation of conscience, the slightest sin pierces like current through you. If you have walked in holiness for a long time, sin shocks. But if yours is a perpetual sin-repent, sin-repent life, you will not receive the same shock. The intensity of the shock will depend on where you are

with God.

One sister went to have some passport size photos. In the process the photographer's servant made a mistake and she lied to cover him from his boss. All night she could not sleep. First thing in the morning she went to confess her sin and to repent. It was her first conscious sin since she believed a year before.

Does sin trouble you? Is yours a seared conscience? From being seared, a man heads only to perdition.

As soon as the conscience is defiled, there should be immediate repentance. If repentance is done, the conscience becomes cleansed. The Bible says,

"Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22).

The cleansed conscience can be purified; "He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith." This talks of sanctification. Purification is the result of faith" (Acts 15:9). A purified conscience is the conscience of the believer who has stopped sinning.

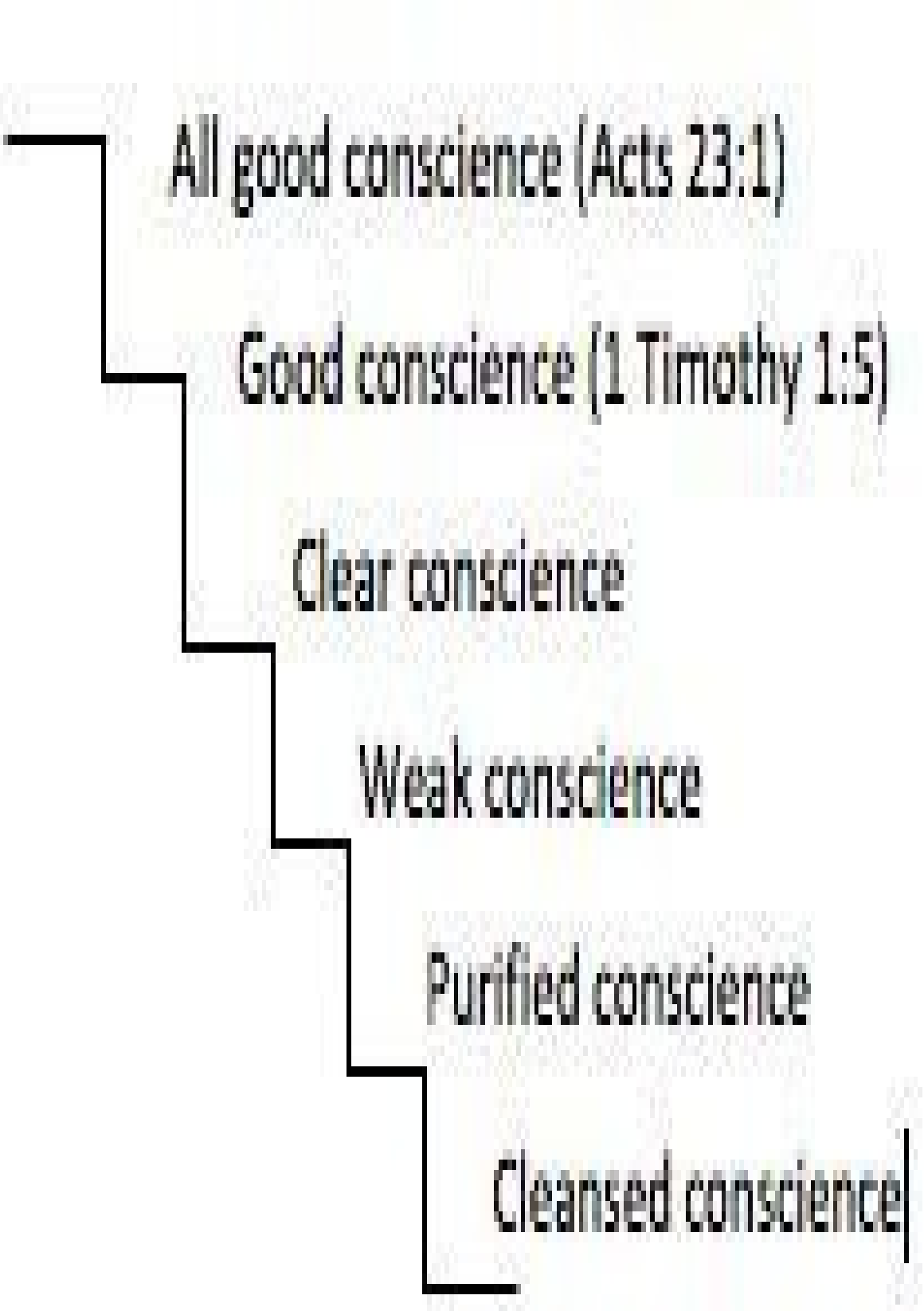
The Clear And All-Good Conscience

There is the clear conscience; "So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man"(Acts 24:16). Then, "The goal of this command is love,

which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5). There is also the all good conscience, "Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said,

"My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day" (Acts 23:1).

We may represent the above states of conscience in the following manner:


All good conscience (Acts 23:1)
Good conscience (1 Timothy 1:5)
Clear conscience
Weak conscience
Purified conscience
Cleansed conscience

Conscience And The Power To Repent

Some people go to work; steal paper, phone in the boss' absence, do not work, get a salary, but are not troubled. They sin, do not repent and keep on. They are on the pathway that leads off the faith.

Many believers have lost the power to repent. They will be eternally sorry when they face the loss of their rank.

Many cannot hear God; they can receive nothing from God. There are no critical answers to their prayers. They pray routine things. There is no evidence that they have pressed through to God. In my prayer files, there are requests for things that cannot happen except by heaven's intervention.

Where is the evidence of God's intervention in your affairs? Are you in the Christian life only to avoid hell? What a cheap reason to be in the faith.

What you are now will tell on your children to the third and fourth generation. Let me ask you; what are you passing down to your children? Look at your children, where are the marks of an explosive faith? Do you find it in your life? Do you have the knowledge of God that makes the difference? I pray you may do something about it.

Decide that at all cost you will normalise your conscience. Although I said that the externals do not matter, you must do all with all your might. If you do not pray with all your might, you may not be heard. Go somewhere and weep out to

God. Your seared conscience could come alive and your whole Christian life normalised. May God bring you there.

Conscience And The Christian Cause

What hope is there for the conscience of a man who ought to be in the mission field but who remains at home? He is outside of God's will. It is a tragedy of tragedies to be outside of God's will. Is there any possibility for such a man to ever have a good conscience?

What is God's ideal for you? What has He called you to do for Him or for His purposes on earth? Are you working at it? What you make of it will make or mar your conscience.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE X

Conscience And Intuition

When a man’s intuition is blocked by

sin,

love of the world,

love of the things of the world,

love of self,

he cannot receive from God. Such a man may have ideas but no Bible light. Since

sin,

love of the world,

love of the things of the world,

love of self,

are taken care of in consecration, the consecrated man receives revelation.

People with a naturally active intuition still cannot receive revelation from God. This is because the natural intuition only receives revelation from the flesh. The spiritual intuition receives revelation from God. What a world of difference!

Do you

love the world,

the things of the world,

the self and

harbour sin?

If yes, then you are a tragic loser. It takes the love of just one thing that should not be loved and the intuition is blocked.

Do you see then why there must be total war against;

sin,

love of the world,

love of the things of the world,

love of self?

You love them to your hurt.

Do you now see why God does not talk to some people? Their intuition is blocked. It cannot receive revelation. Every harm done to the conscience affects the intuition. But the intuition could also be directly hurt. When it happens the man will seek God’s will but cannot find.

Conscience And Possessions

When you have one thing more than you should, then you are done for. The devil may deceive you to say that it is not worth much. It is. It will affect your conscience and your whole life. You cannot be the same person when you know that one thing more than God requires of you is clandestinely there.

At the level of the spirit, things possessed and those which are only desired, are one. What you desire is already carried in your heart. And, God looks at the heart. You may pretend, hide, etc., but it is just folly. The thing is there. When you will know the impact of things on your spirit, then you may readily let them go.

What about sins committed in a dream? We want to say that you cannot commit in a dream what is not in your heart. The dream is only an x-ray of your heart. An immoral heart will dream immoral dreams. A heart full of the things of the world will dream possessions.

When the love of the world and the things of the world come in, everything else becomes confused. You now understand the lesson of the stable and the manger where Jesus was born. You now understand why the son of man had no place to lay His head.

Why should today not be the day you came to the decision that;

sin,

love of the world,

love of the things of the world,

love of the self,

are for ever done away with in your life? Are you so paralysed you cannot act?

You gain in the Christian life in proportion to your loss in the world, and in the things of the world. What happens to your service will depend on what happens to your conscience, intuition and communion.

You can only bless in proportion to what you have lost. When the brethren sold things in the Jerusalem church, the money was laid at Peter's feet. But faced with a lame beggar he said - silver or gold I have none. He had separated himself totally from the money. He had only Jesus, and so he gave the beggar Jesus and health.

Harmony, Conscience And God's Leading

It is of utmost importance for spiritual health that a believer should be in harmony with the others. If there are quarrels, grudges, bitterness and the like, the believer's conscience suffers greatly. Let us take the example of Paul's sharp separation with Barnabas. We want to begin by saying that their separation was carried out in the flesh. After that, the intuition of Paul became inefficient. Let us trace the story.

Paul and Barnabas had gone round preaching the gospel;

"Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us go back and visit the brethren in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.' Barnabas wanted to take John also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches" (Acts 15: 36-41).

After the sharp disagreement and separation,

"Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (Acts 16: 6 - 10).

The Holy Spirit stopped them, then would not let them in. The Holy Spirit began to stand as a barrier. Paul began to struggle. The parting had left a negative impact on his intuition. They had not separated the Holy Spirit-way. The sharpness of the separation had affected his intuition negatively.

Although God was with Paul, he began to see things as through a cloud. He became almost confused as to God's leading. His capacity to receive direction from God had been harmed in the sharpness of his separation with Barnabas. Years later, he was to counsel Timothy,

"And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful (2 Timothy 2: 14).

He had learned his lessons. You better do same.

Food For Thought

The presence of people laden with things offends those who are spiritual.

If you marry a lover of the world, you have committed the error of your life.

Years of loving and flirting with the world make one blind. He may not then see the evil he is doing to himself.

You are responsible for what you are and become.

A heart full of the things of the world will dream possessions.

The state of one's conscience after being forgiven depends upon the extent to which the person plunged into sin.

Sin is a tragedy.

Even when one has been forgiven, there are the lingering impacts. The faith capacities are weakened. The capacity to lay hold on God is weakened.

The man who will not repent immediately but does so afterwards will yet be forgiven. But, postponed repentance only gives enough time for sin to corrode the sinner's conscience.

You cannot sin, repent and immediately find back what you were before sinning. A man who stole, committed fornication and adultery, etc. and a man who did not plunge into these things do not begin the Christian life at the same level. The one who plunged into sin has a lot to work out in restitution, being accused and etc..

The violation of God's law is always a disaster.

Sin cuts through generations. Even when the sin has been stopped, progeny may not be able to stop it.

The sins of Paul were the sins of opposing the gospel because he thought it was a lie. He was not given to breaking the law of God or of society. Those who gave their bodies left and right did it even against societal law. Their case is worse.

The calamity of giving oneself to debauchery is eliminatory in the ranks of God's generals. Study the men God used in the past in a distinct way and see whether this is not true.

The effects of sin linger long afterwards.

Look around and you will find that those who plunged deeply into sin have such struggles to find themselves out. Their thefts, fighting, etc. have affected them too much.

If you meet a child, warn him against sin.

Even among the immoral, those who only kissed girls and those who went into

them are not suffering the same destruction in their spirit. Those who committed immorality with one person and those who went from woman to woman are not the same. Yet all are in trouble.

Sin is great evil against God and great evil against oneself.

Some of the things people suffer later in life can only be traced to their past sin. Their sin was an action. There has to be a reaction.

Since many people never repent deeply, they drag the disaster of sin all along their life.

A man will remember the sin he committed fifty years afterwards.

Do not steal, do not lie, do not cheat.

Humble yourself.

Do not love the world. Do not love the things of the world and the self; If you do, these will stand as invisible barriers on your way.

Women who rebel against their husbands in their hearts are blocked spiritually, and cannot get to God’s heights. Few women get to God’s heights because of rebellion, manifest or only in the secrets of their hearts. Their repentance must be very deep for them to reach God’s heights anymore.

Blessed is the person who did not plunge into sin. Blessed is the person who heeded the warning of society and mere religion before coming to know the Lord. The violators have punished themselves.

People generally look at what their intended spouse looks like physically. This is of little consequence. The question is - what is the heart like? How many heart accidents has the person suffered?

There is too little preaching against sin. Yet sin is a disaster to the saved and to the lost. The preachers are not wild against sin. There are too many preachers of cheap grace.

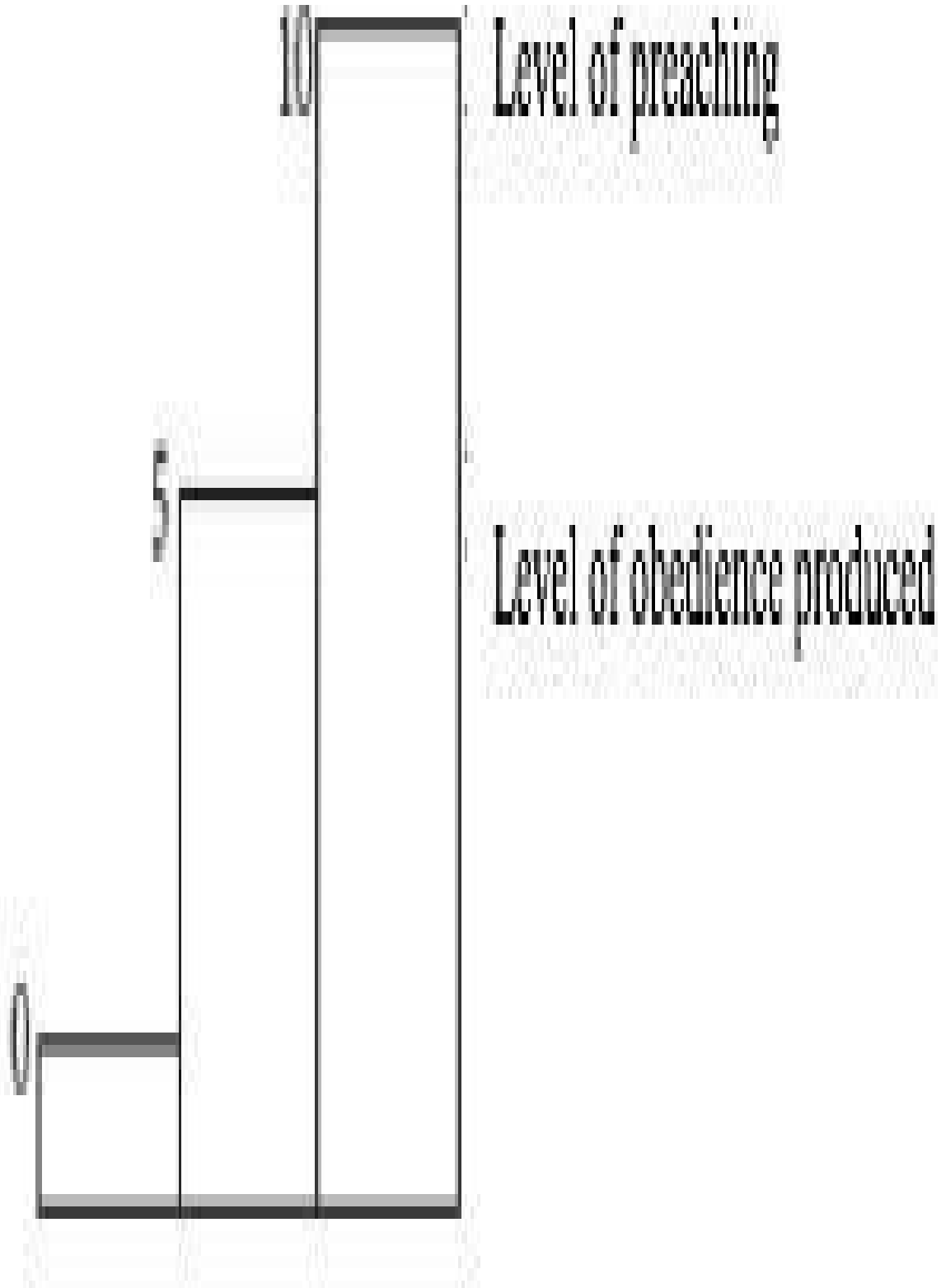
that God will raise preachers who know God’s fury against sin! People who share God’s anger against sin!

Preachers must come to hate their own sin, feel the pain and agony of it, then can they impart the same to others. People will not obey according to the level of their message. They will obey according to the level of the preacher's life.

People will follow what you are. You can hold giving campaigns, people will give according to your own level of giving.

When I pastored the church in Yaounde, it prayed, because I prayed. Prayer is central in my life. Then there came a time we agreed that we shall lead the church with the elders as a co-operate body of elders. Now it depends on the praying of the body of elders, no longer only on me. There was a call of the elders to pray, five years ago that has not been heeded to. The results are there for all to see.

The problem is not so much a man's message as it is his life. Look at the diagram below. If you preach at level ten, and live at level five, people will respond at level five.


10
Level of preaching
5
Level of obedience produced
0

When convicted, do you obey immediately? When you confront sin in your life do you repent immediately? If not, your life will produce no lasting impact.

Is it fair for you to tell anyone about God? Will it be fair to have your life reproduced in another as it is now?

One thing that has often shocked me is the number of missionaries who, evidently, only want to go to the mission field. Why must they hurry to go when they do not have the heart to reproduce in others for the glory of God? What about you? What do you want to go and do in the mission field?

If in the heart you do not have what is praiseworthy to give to others, must you go? To go and destroy them? They will not resemble your words, they will resemble your heart.

Can you tell someone, “come and follow me?” Can you ask God to reproduce your heart in many others? The answer to this question should decide whether at all you should preach the gospel.

Many leaders complain, “People don’t follow me...” What, if they did? What heart will be imparted to them?

Once a missionary on training knew that he had to go to the mission field as a man in whose heart there is no falsehood. He started working on his heart, abandoned it and went to the mission field. Now he is under trial. The church he is leading rose up to twenty-six members, then dropped to one. It was a church of criminals and drunkards. He then told himself it was because of the lack of long fasts. His wife has finished a 40-day fast, he is doing one. But that is not the answer. He ought rather to deal with the falsehood in his life. Are you too avoiding the central issue where God is pointing? Then you will not prevail.

There could be a congregation of 1.000 people, not one fit for the kingdom of God.

Decide not to pray a prayer that is not true. Do not do anything to please anybody that is not true. Do not demand of any person what is not true in your life.

What is your true condition? If you cheat, God will find you out. What is your true level? Why don’t you own up to the truth? The stilts will fail you.

Have you formerly professed a false step? Correct it now. Get right. Take this opportunity to be honest in order to save yourself from a life long calamity.

The truth always wins.

A glorious lie will crumble.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE XI

Conscience And Government

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants who give their whole time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him; if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour” (Romans 13:1-7).

Christians ought to obey governments first of all to avoid punishment and the anger of these governments and also for the sake of conscience.

Civil Disobedience And Conscience

When do you disobey government? When is civil disobedience acceptable? There are a number of instances in the Bible where the government was disobeyed.

Let us look at the case of the Egyptian midwives: "Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them. Then a new king who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labour, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with hard labour in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labour the Egyptians used them ruthlessly." The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?" The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive." So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own. Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl alive" (Exodus 1:6-22). This was civil disobedience because they feared the Lord and because of their conscience.

In the same context, Moses' motherhid him for months. She too did not obey the given law: now a man of the house of Levi married a Levite woman, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she

placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him" Exodus 2:1-4).

We have a third case in the book of Daniel where the four Hebrew men did not eat the king's food because the meat was sacrificed to idols: "The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service...But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.... but the official told Daniel, "l am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men of your age? The king will then have my head because of you" (Daniel 1: 5-10). But in the end, they neither ate the king's food nor drank his wine.

Again, when they would not worship the golden image, they disobeyed the king. Their conscience told them they could not worship an idol: "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude towards them changed. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace" (Daniel 3:16-20).

Look at what their civil disobedience produced: "Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way." Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon." How is it with you? Do you have

their courage and faith to stand up to what you believe?

The case of Daniel:

“Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent.” “Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God. So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: “O King Darius, live for ever! The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors, have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered - in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed” (Daniel 6:-8).

“So King Darius put the decree in writing. Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the Windows opened towards Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?” the king answered, The decree stands - in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort

until sundown to save him." Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, "Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed." So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!" (Daniel 6:10-16).

The story continues,

"A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep. At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" Daniel answered, "O king, live for ever! My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king." The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God" (Daniel 6:17-23).

Lions know those of good character. They knew that Daniel was falsely accused.

Let us look at what happens to his opponents:

"At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all

their bones" (Daniel 6:24).

Will God defend you the day you are wrongly accused?

The case of Peter and John:

"Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:18-20).

"Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy." They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. "Go, stand in the temple courts", he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life." At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin - the full assembly of the elders of Israel - and sent to the jail for the apostles. But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, "We found the jail-securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside." On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled, wondering what would come of this. Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them. Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." Peter and the other apostles

replied: “We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead - whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins in Israel. We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honoured by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while” (Acts 5: 17-34).

With a word from the Lord through an angel, they could not harm their consciences by remaining quiet. They knew they had to speak on, and speak they did, at cost to themselves.

THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE XII

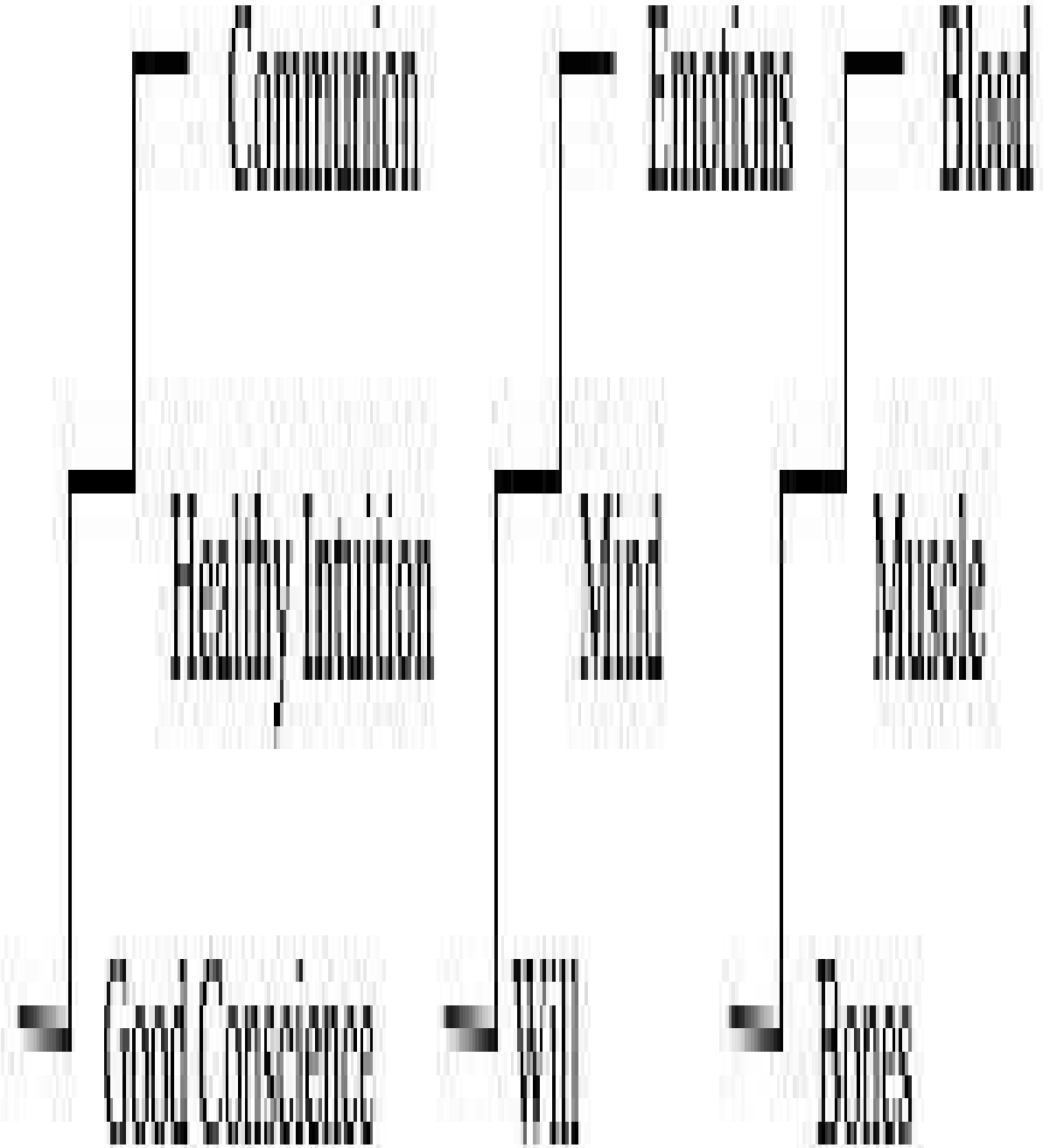
The Clear Conscience And Communion

“I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.” For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:3-7).

How can you have a pure heart when your conscience is accusing you? When the heart is pure, conscience will testify to its state.

When you have a pure heart, communion is normal. People whose consciences are wounded or defiled, cannot flow out in communion and touch God.

Emotionally some people are just bones, dry, shattered. They cannot flow out and reach out to others. It is a terrible thing to have a person with destroyed emotions. The emotions are to the soul what the communion is to the spirit and blood to the body:


Conscience
Emotions
Blood
Healthy Intuition
Mind
Muscle
God Conscience
Will
Bones

When the spirit is healthy, there comes a time in communion when a man reaches and wraps himself in God. This happens as intimacy deepens unto fusion with God.

Conscience, Communion And Worship

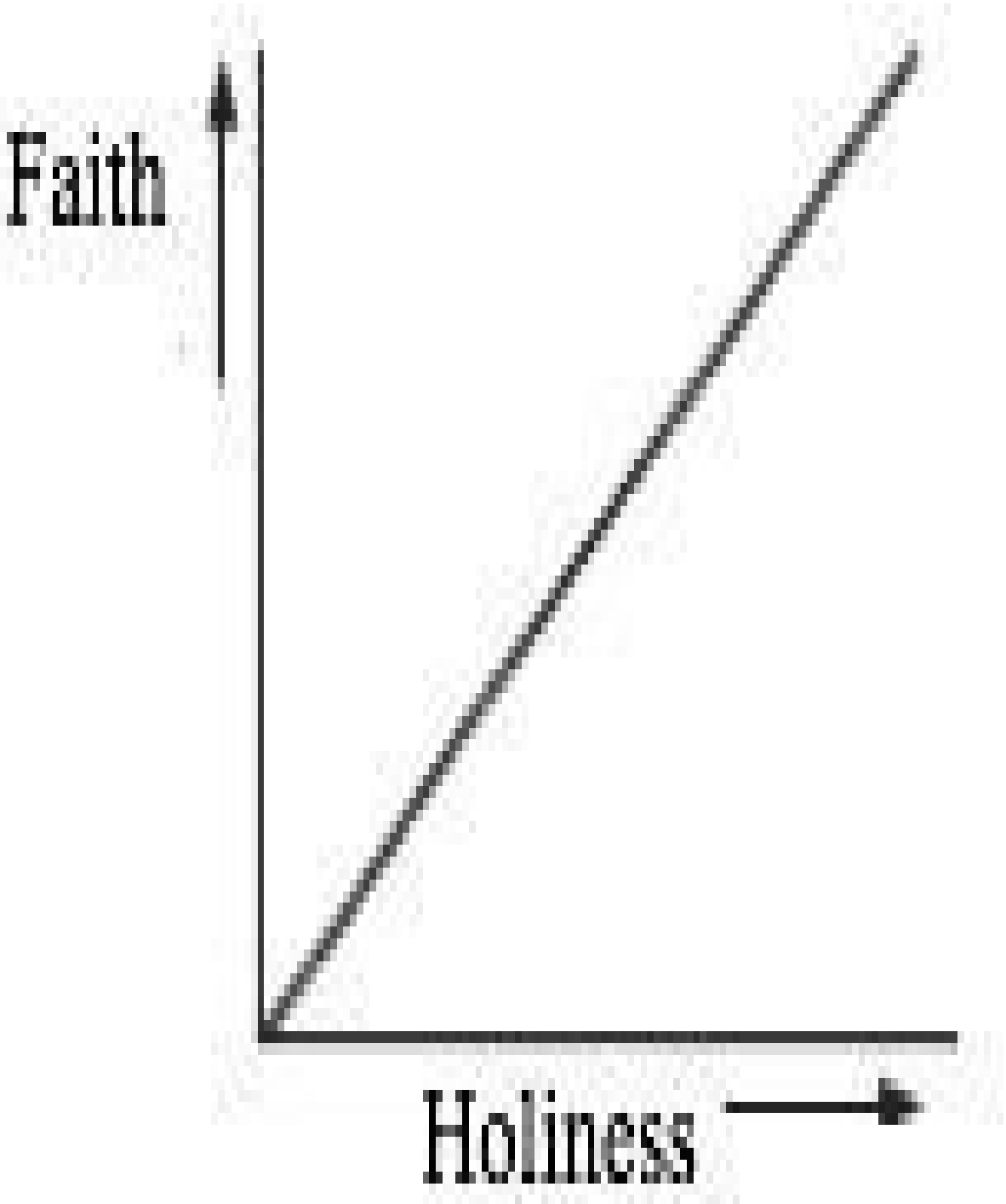
A good conscience produces a healthy intuition and enhances communion. This deep, fusing, reaching out is the best that could be this side of heaven. It is worship; worship is of the spirit, for people who live in God’s presence. It is neither of the flesh nor of talent. It is not of the soul, not of the body. In worship, the spirit reaches out to God in communion and melts in Him. O the joy of worshipping in the spirit, totally separated from bodily motion!

Conscience, Communion And Faith

Faith is this reaching out to God, wrapping around what God has promised and refusing to let go. A pure heart and good conscience are indispensable for sincere faith.

Conscience, Holiness And Faith

Faith and holiness are inseparable:


Faith
Holiness

Those who

live in sin,

love the world,

love the things of the world,

love the self,

cannot have faith. Their conscience is damaged. Their communion is damaged. They cannot lay hold on God. They cannot trust that God will do it. They turn to the world spontaneously. Paul writes to Timothy, “...holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith” (1 Timothy 1:19).

All must be sacrificed on the altar of a good conscience towards God. When you compromise for whatever the world offers, you have lost everything.

Have you defiled your conscience for gain? Do you go around with a soiled conscience on an issue about which you compromised? Was your conscience bought? Did you agree with your earthly husband to please him and to displease your heavenly husband? Did this make you keep a treacherous conscience?

My stand is, let me lose everything if only I may maintain a good conscience with God.

A Good Conscience And Spiritual Rectitude

When a man's conscience is soiled, he wanders away from the truth, maybe without knowing it. A good conscience will help us not to derail, not to wander away from the faith. Paul says,

"Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk" (1 Timothy 1:6).

I remember a sister who some years saw demons everywhere; She had derailed. Everything cannot be explained as the activity of demons.

A Good Conscience And Spiritual Triumph

A good conscience will help you win. Paul speaks to his son in the faith in these terms;

"Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith" (1 Timothy 1:18-19).

A good conscience will help you avoid shipwreck. Paul gives us two examples of those who went into shipwreck:

“Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme” (1 Timothy 1:20).

If you are not walking and working with a good conscience, you will shipwreck your faith.

The Clear Conscience And Truth

In Hebrews we read,

“Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way” (Hebrews 13:18).

A clear conscience will enable you to be true and honest. Many believers are dishonest. There is no marriage to truth. They seek what they can get away with. If they are not caught they will go away with it. This is sad.

What are you hiding? When I entered into the life of truth, I said I will first of all be true to God and then to myself. I am hiding nothing. I fear nothing will be exposed. I have not withheld any truth from anybody. There is nobody on earth I did not tell the truth to.

What are you falsifying? What are you hiding? I have no feelings for which I am ashamed. I have no desires that are shameful. Have you set your heart to be honest in all things? Can you look at God to the face? Can you look at the man of God to the face?

Somehow the light of God comes through the eyes of those who are holy. The unholy cannot look at them to the face. When some people who are close to me sin, they run away from me. They equally run away from God.

The apostle Peter says,

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).

The Good Conscience And Consecration

A good conscience enhances consecration. How can I lay my all at the altar when my conscience accuses me? When there is a barrier to light, how can I give all to God?

A Clear Conscience And Witnessing

In witnessing a clear conscience gives boldness. How will you ask men to depart from the sins and practices you have not abandoned? The Bible says,

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matthew

6:22-23).

Sin is like dust and each particle makes opaque.

A Clear Conscience And Spiritual Maturity

Paul confessed,

“So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man (Acts 24:16).

He removes every trace of doubtful thing, obeying the law of conscience. In this way, a man trains himself to spiritual maturity:

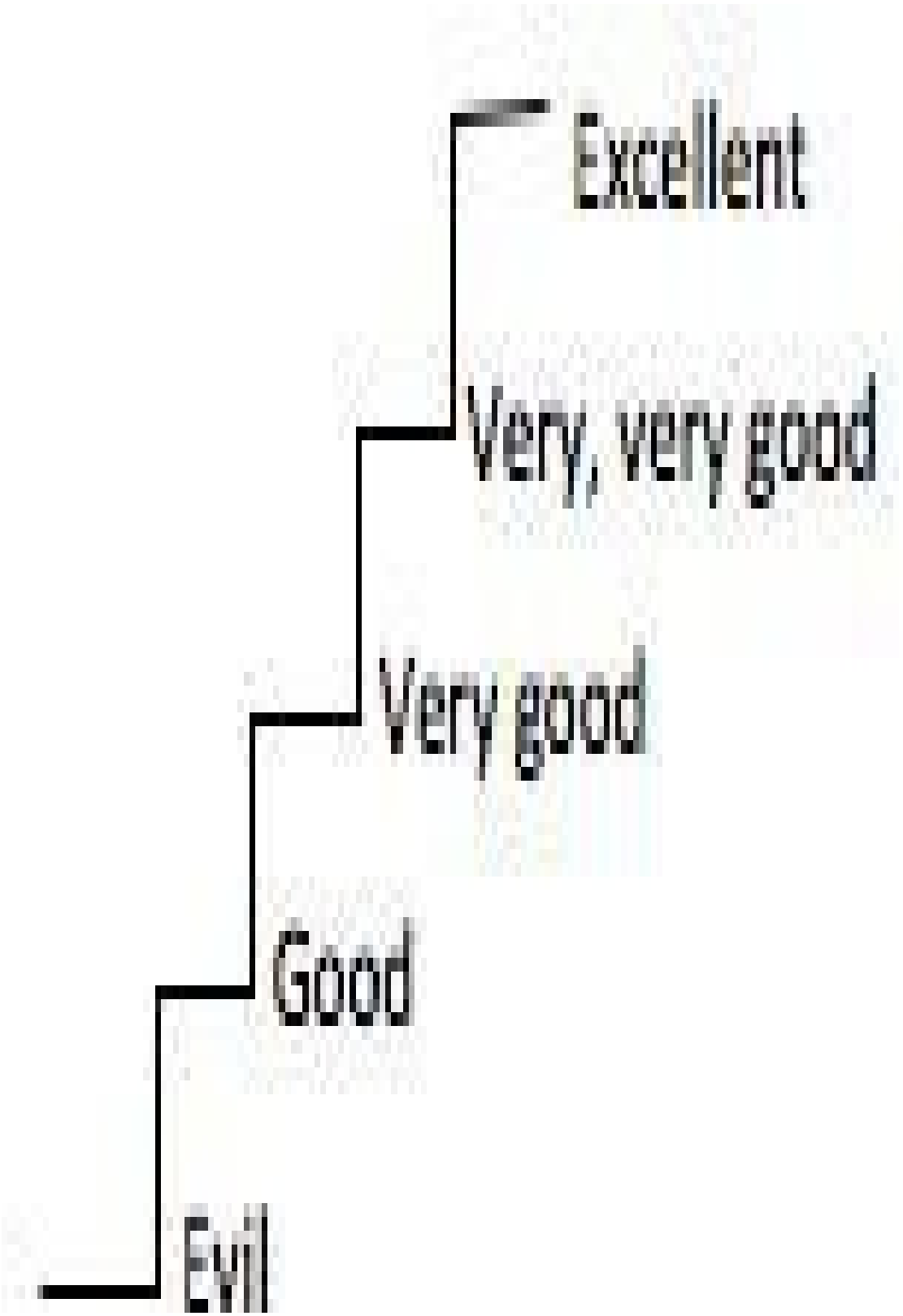
“Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” (Hebrews 5:13-14).

Even as the eyes can be trained to see better and better, a sustained clear conscience becomes clearer and more sensitive.

The childish are always asking questions; can I not stay away from prayer and still be a Christian? Can I not be absent from time to time? Yes, you may have your freedom. You can own everything. Borrow. You can be in debt. But you

will not win the crown.

The mature can distinguish between the following:


Excellent
Very, very good
Very good
Good
Evil

A Clear Conscience And Prayer

“If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer. Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!” (Psalm 66:18-20).

The function at work in the heart here is conscience. If it is violated and prayer is said, God will not answer.

We further read,

“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him” (1 John 3:21-22).

When the conscience is clear and the person is bold, prayer reaches God and answers come.

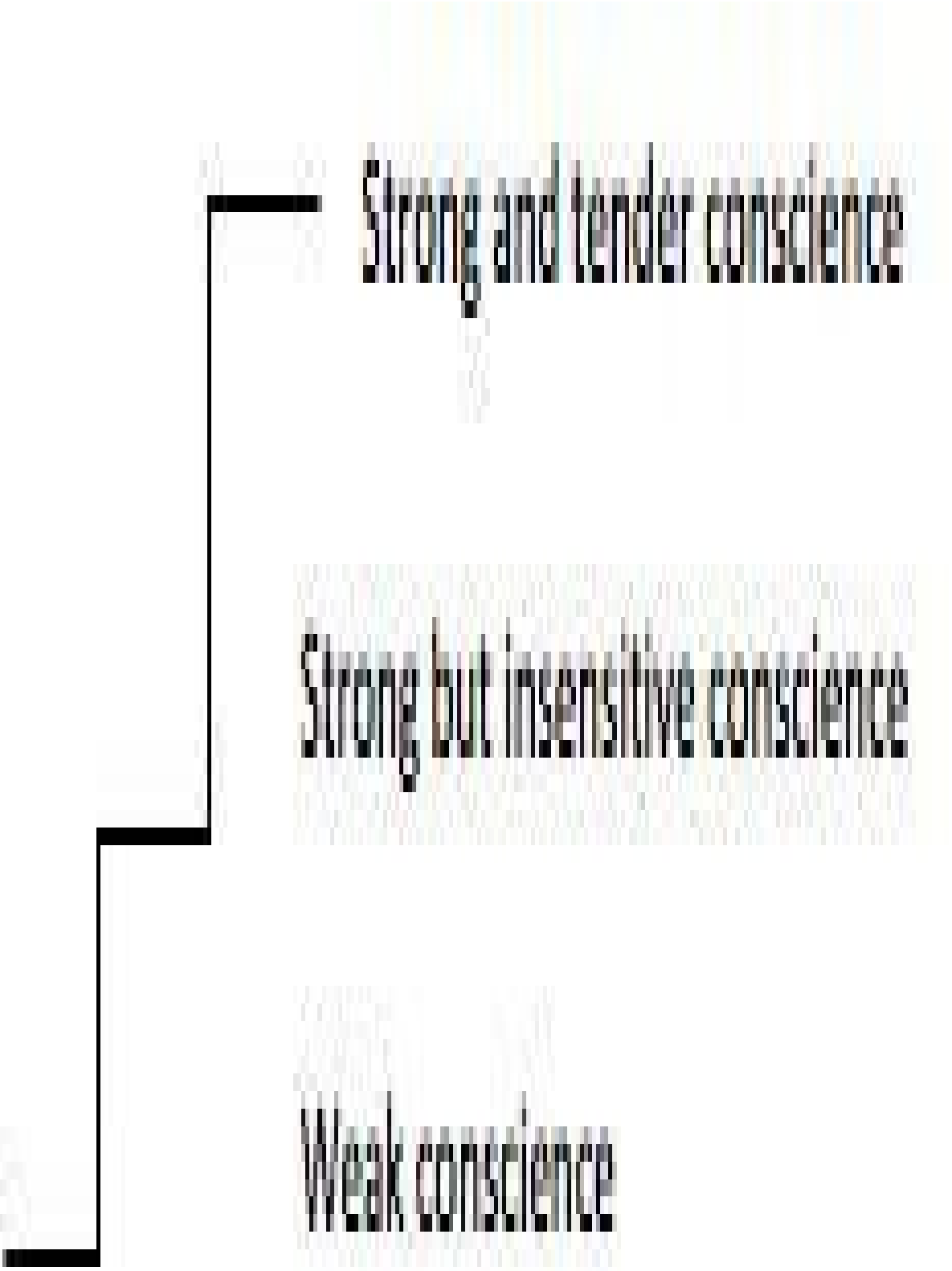
THE STATE OF CONSCIENCE XIII

The Strong And Weak Conscience 1

There is a strong conscience and there is a weak one. It is a good or clear conscience that lacks Knowledge. It is not the conscience of a sinner. Its critical element is that it lacks knowledge. It is very easy to confuse a sensitive conscience and a weak conscience. A weak conscience is not a guilty, corrupt or seared conscience. We may attempt a presentation as below:



The strong conscience can be strong and insensitive or strong and tender:


Strong and tender conscience
Strong but insensitive conscience
Weak conscience

An all good conscience and the good conscience can be weak or strong.

The Strong And Weak Conscience 2

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgement on disputable matters. One man’s faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God’s judgement seat. It is written: ‘As surely as I live’, says the Lord, ‘Every knee will bow before me, every tongue will confess to God.” Therefore let us stop passing judgement on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling-block or obstacle in your brother’s way.

As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died. Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to

peace and to mutual edification. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall. So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin" (Romans 14).

The Strong And Weak Conscience 3

"We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbour for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name." Again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples." And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. I have written to you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again, because of

the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sacrificed by the Holy Spirit. Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done - by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ, It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there.

For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen" (Romans 15).

The Strong And Weak Conscience 4

"If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgement instead of before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will

judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church!" I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? But instead, one brother goes to law against another - and this in front of unbelievers! The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers. Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God; And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. "Everything is permissible for me" - but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me" - but I will not be mastered by anything. "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food" - but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!

Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Free from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6).

The Strong And Weak Conscience 5

“For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is. written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry”

We should not commit sexual immorality as some of them did -and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did - and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did - and were killed by the destroying angel. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord’s jealousy? Are we stronger than he? “Everything is permissible” - but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible” — but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, for, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. But if anyone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience’ sake - the other man’s conscience, I

mean, not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience? If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God — even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved" (1 Corinthians 10).

The Strong And Weak Conscience 6

"Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves God is known by God. So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. But not every one knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling-block to the weak. For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall." (1 Corinthians 8)

Conscience And Subjective Issues

There are things that the scriptures have no verdict about. It does not talk on what house, how much space, or car one should own. A man will build and buy a car according to his vision and consecration. If he is not consecrated, he will build, buy, be educated according to the standards of the world.

A sister I know in one country came here dressed in her pants, so to say. Some brethren saw her and thought she was lost. She had not taken into account the fact that she was in a milieu where such dressing was totally unacceptable.

I see an increasing number of women with jeans and trousers. Well, this does not have anything to do with the gospel. Naturally for me, a woman should not be in trousers. Even if she has not believed, a woman with painted lips, nails, etc. will not be in my world. These are not gospel convictions. These are the notions of Zach Fomum as a man. Fifteen to twenty years ago, I never saw such paintings for women. That is my natural way of life. This perhaps, comes from my upbringing. I saw men in trousers and women in their dresses.

But I ask - what may a woman in trousers do to a young convert? What if your dressing says “Here am I, almost naked, what are you waiting for?” There is increasingly artificial hair in the choir. I will normally burn all wigs. That is just me. It is not the gospel.

Even if I had not believed, I will work hard and be goal-directed. It is the raw material that makes me. Before I believed, I knew that to lose a mark in my performance was failure. I thought that all the marks were to be gotten. That was the thinking of my infancy.

If I fail one million times, my whole being remains against failure. Everything in

me hates falling short of the whole. I have never thought ninety percent was of God. What of the other ten percent? Should God not have it too? Take for instance, if somebody thinks that I have done wonders writing 100 books, I am troubled by the 400 not yet written. That is me.

If I gave God one million today, I will regret that it was not five. If you listen to me and think that I have a sense of satisfaction, or done great, you are totally mistaken. Every mountain top has only lifted my eyes to see the next mountain and set me planning, yearning and wishing the possession of the new height.

Characteristics Of The Weak Conscience

The weak conscience lacks knowledge.

It does not have full power to condemn the wrong. Firstly because it does not live up to that level. Listen to a man's sermon and you will know him. If he always preaches grace, it is likely because his heart condemns him, and he seeks grace. Some people preach grace because their standards are low. When a preacher changes, his message changes. Let the man who used to sleep five hours begin to sleep two or three hours a day. He will become intolerant to those who sleep away their time.

The weak conscience does not condemn all that it should condemn.

It also condemns some things it should not condemn. When a person knows only little, he cannot have standards higher than his conscience.

The weak conscience is easily wounded, offended, grieved by what others do. Remember the verse that says, "When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:12). Put it this way — a weak conscience reacts towards man, is easily grieved, and wounded by man.

The weak conscience stumbles easily.

A weak conscience is critical upon others.

A weak conscience has confused priorities.

It is worried about what is eaten, drunk and worn.

The weak conscience fears freedom. Those with a weak conscience will suspect a brother and a sister walking together.

The weak conscience can become defiled. I have seen people who were so anxious not to offend the Lord in external issues. Instead of growing and becoming stronger Christians, they relayed in sin and now they do the things they could not have done before. There are people who said - do not go to balls, do not paint, etc., who now do them and commit immorality.

A lady once said she could not go to bed with her unbelieving husband because God had said touch nothing unclean. She moved out of her bedroom. I told her to get back and she parted company with me. Although God had used me for miracles in her life she walked away. She would not eat with her husband. Later on, she cooked food for a worse kind. She had sunk. Firstly, it was a weak conscience, lacking knowledge, yet wanting to please the Lord.

The weak conscience wants to impose its convictions on all.

The motives of a weak conscience are mixed. It wants to please the Lord, but also wants to please self.

The weak conscience is full of the self.

Characteristics Of The Strong Conscience

A strong conscience has spiritual knowledge.

It is not moved by superstition, and by tradition.

The strong conscience is discerning.

It is exercised and comes to a settled position in knowledge.

It has a firm decision to obey the word of God.

As he obeys, the man with a strong conscience is capable of stepping out by faith.

He believes the word and obeys the word at any consequence.

He knows the Jesus that has set him free.

He knows that God has given us all things to be enjoyed. He knows that every good gift comes from God.

The person with a strong conscience knows how to deal with children in the faith. He smiles at his children. He is tolerant with the weak, and with those who see differently.

He knows that the externals can vary from place to place. In some places, if a brother is found embracing a sister, they are finished. If a brother and sister hold hands, they are done for. Artificial hair in some Christian circles is thought to be a thing of the underworld, and so on. Once a lady said, “Well, Brother Zach loves the Lord, but the devil has moved him to study science.” In her circles, science was not of God. Of another sister, with long beautiful hair, a person said, “This sister loves the Lord, but the day her hair will go down there will be joy in heaven.”

Those with strong consciences can break forth into a deep relationship with God where they totally please God.

The person with a strong conscience is not out to please himself. “For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me” (Romans 15:3).

The strong conscience is full of the Holy Spirit.

How Should A Person With A Strong Conscience Relate To One With A Weak Conscience?

He should accept the weak: “Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgement on disputable matters” Romans14:1).

He should build them up.

He should please the weak. Paul said, “Even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved” (1 Corinthians 10:33). He is to be tender and patient with them. He must ask what the act for which he has a clear conscience about will do to those of a weak conscience.

There are many things that we could do and places to which we could go freely but because of the weak, we must abstain. There may be no sin in getting into a bar and having a soft drink, but he may not, because it will shock a weaker brother.

Finally

The Lord has done all He should do to ensure that your conscience should be and function at the highest level possible. My prayer for you is that you may enter into God’s health for your conscience. May you become all that God meant you to be in your relationship with Him. May you accomplish all that He assigned to you for His eternal purposes.

God bless you.

Very Important!!!

If you have not yet received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, I encourage you to receive Him. Here are some steps to help you,

ADMIT that you are a sinner by nature and by practice and that on your own you are without hope. Tell God you have personally sinned against Him in your thoughts, words and deeds. Confess your sins to Him, one after another in a sincere prayer. Do not leave out any sins that you can remember. Truly turn from your sinful ways and abandon them. If you stole, steal no more. If you have been committing adultery or fornication, stop it. God will not forgive you if you have no desire to stop sinning in all areas of your life, but if you are sincere, He will give you the power to stop sinning.

BELIEVE that Jesus Christ, who is God's Son, is the only Way, the only Truth and the only Life. Jesus said,

"I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

The Bible says,

"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

“And there is salvation in no one else (apart from Jesus), for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God...” (John 1:12).

BUT,

CONSIDER the cost of following Him. Jesus said that all who follow Him must deny themselves, and this includes selfish financial, social and other interests. He also wants His followers to take up their crosses and follow Him. Are you prepared to abandon your own interests daily for those of Christ? Are you prepared to be led in a new direction by Him? Are you prepared to suffer for Him and die for Him if need be? Jesus will have nothing to do with half-hearted people. His demands are total. He will only receive and forgive those who are prepared to follow Him AT ANY COST. Think about it and count the cost. If you are prepared to follow Him, come what may, then there is something to do.

INVITE Jesus to come into your heart and life. He says,

“Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door (to his heart and life), I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me ” (Revelation 3:20).

Why don’t you pray a prayer like the following one or one of your own

construction as the Holy Spirit leads?

“Lord Jesus, I am a wretched, lost sinner who has sinned in thought, word and deed. Forgive all my sins and cleanse me. Receive me, Saviour and transform me into a child of God. Come into my heart now and give me eternal life right now. I will follow you at all costs, trusting the Holy Spirit to give me all the power I need.”

When you pray this prayer sincerely, Jesus answers at once and justifies you before God and makes you His child.

Please write to us (ztfbooks@cmfionline.org) and I will pray for you and help you as you go on with Jesus Christ.

Thank You

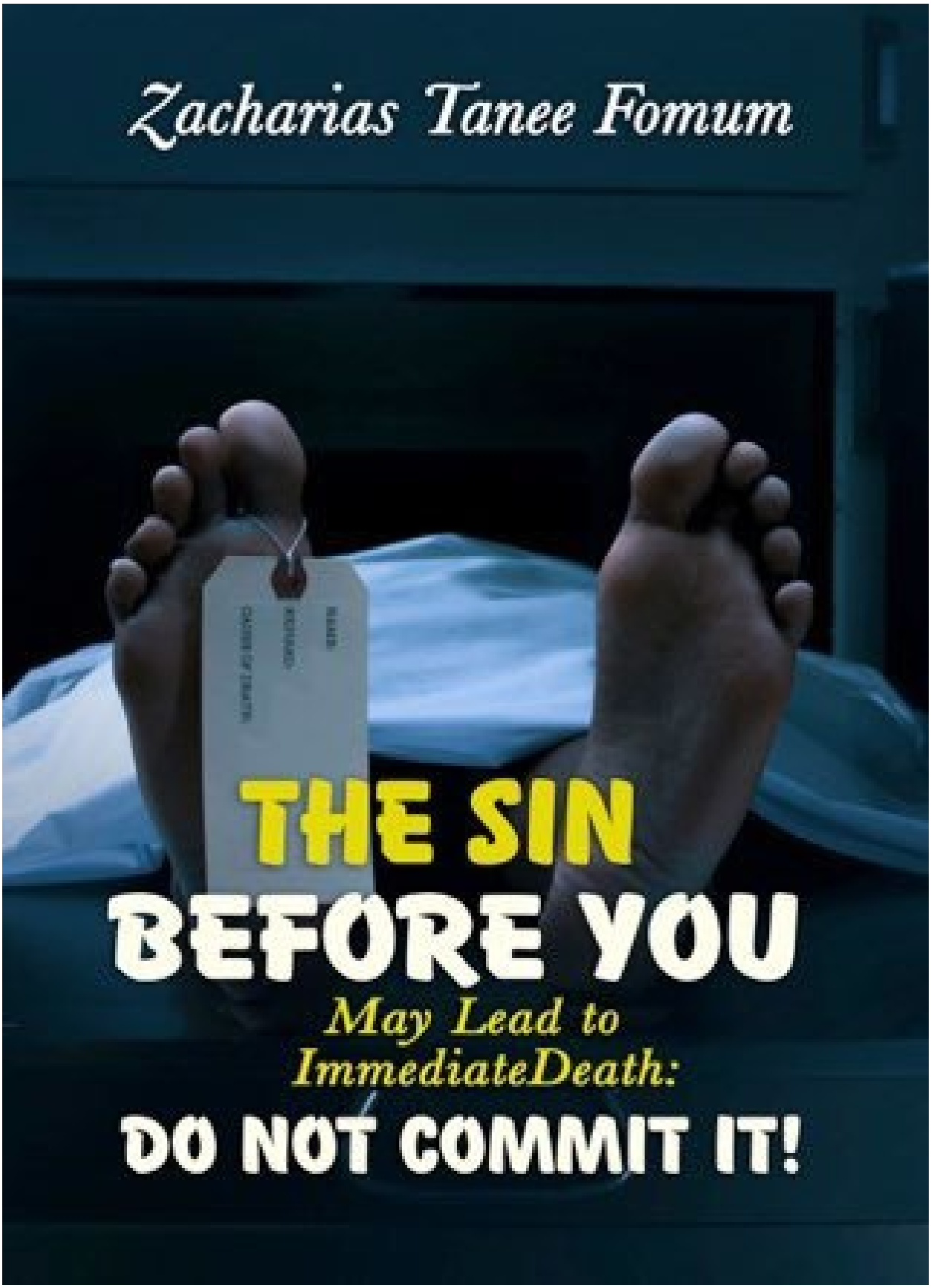
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Zacharias Tanee Fomum



THE SIN BEFORE YOU

May Lead to ImmediateDeath:

DO NOT COMMIT IT!

This is one of the most serious books I have ever written. If I remember correctly, it is perhaps my seventieth book. It is also a book which is being finished in the month of my twenty-eighth spiritual birthday. I am grateful to the Lord that from the depth of my heart, I do not know any sin that I am knowingly committing. I can also say that, by the grace of God, I do not know any plan or plans that I am making, have made or intend to make, that are not resonant with any aspect of the will of God that He has shown to me. By the grace of God, I have covenanted myself solemnly before the Lord that I will not do anything until I have sought His will in the matter and, to the best of my knowledge, I am fully persuaded that that thing is the will of God. In addition to this, I have covenanted myself before the Lord that any moment I find that I have committed or I am committing any sin or doing anything that is out of resonance with the will of God, I will stop it at once and confess what I have done to the Lord God Almighty and to one human being. My prayer is that the Lord should enable me to so walk in all of the future. My prayer is that the Lord should take me higher and higher in the way of sanctification, so that I will experience in an ever-increasing way the perfect sanctification that He purchased for me by the death of His Precious Son on the Cross. It is from this spiritual position that I have had the courage and peace of mind to write this book.

About the Author



Professor Zacharias Tanee Fomum was born in the flesh on 20th June 1945 and became born again on 13th June 1956. On 1st October 1966, He consecrated his life to the Lord Jesus and to His service, and was filled with the Holy Spirit on 24th October 1970. He was taken to be with the Lord on 14th March, 2009.

Pr Fomum was admitted to a first class in the Bachelor of Science degree, graduating as a prize winning student from Fourah Bay College in the University of Sierra Leone in October 1969. At the age of 28, he was awarded a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry by the University of Makerere, Kampala in Uganda. In October 2005, he was awarded a Doctor of Science (D.Sc) by the University of Durham, Great Britain. This higher doctorate was in recognition of his distinct contributions to scientific knowledge through research. As a Professor of Organic Chemistry in the University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon, Professor Fomum supervised or co-supervised more than 100 Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree theses and co-authored over 160 scientific articles in leading international journals. He considered Jesus Christ the Lord of Science ("For by Him all things were created..." – Colossians 1:16), and scientific research an act of obedience to God's command to "subdue the earth" (Genesis 1:28). He therefore made the Lord Jesus the Director of his research laboratory while he took the place of deputy director, and attributed his outstanding success as a scientist to Jesus' revelational leadership.

In more than 40 years of Christian ministry, Pr Fomum travelled extensively, preaching the Gospel, planting churches and training spiritual leaders. He made more than:

700 missionary journeys within Cameroon, which ranged from one day to three weeks in duration.

500 missionary journeys to more than 70 different nations in all the six continents. These ranged from two days to six weeks in duration.

By the time of his going to be with the Lord in 2009, he had preached in over 1000 localities in Cameroon, sent over 200 national missionaries into many localities in Cameroon and planted over 1300 churches in the various administrative provinces of Cameroon. At his base in Yaoundé, he planted and built a mega-church with his co-workers which grew to a steady membership of about 12,000. Pr Fomum was the founding team-leader of Christian Missionary Fellowship International (CMFI); an evangelism, soul-winning, disciple making, Church-planting and missionary-sending movement with more than 200 international missionaries and thousands of churches in 65 nations spread across Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Oceania. In the course of their ministry, Pr Fomum and his team witnessed more than 10,000 recorded healing miracles performed by God in answer to prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. These miracles include instant healings of headaches, cancers, HIV/AIDS, blindness, deafness, dumbness, paralysis, madness, and new teeth and organs received.

Pr Fomum read the entire Bible more than 60 times, read more than 1350 books on the Christian faith and authored over 150 books to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 5 million copies of these books are in circulation in 12 languages as well as 16 million gospel tracts in 17 languages.

Pr Fomum was a man who sought God. He spent between 15 minutes and six hours daily alone with God in what he called Daily Dynamic Encounters with God (DDEWG). During these DDEWG he read God's Word, meditated on it, listened to God's voice, heard God speak to him, recorded what God was saying to him and prayed it through. He thus had over 18,000 DDEWG. He also had over 60 periods of withdrawing to seek God alone for periods that ranged from 3 to 21 days (which he termed Retreats for Spiritual Progress). The time he spent seeking God slowly transformed him into a man who hungered, thirsted and panted after God. His unceasing heart cry was: "Oh, that I would have more of God!"

Pr Fomum was a man of prayer and a leading teacher on prayer in many churches and conferences around the world. He considered prayer to be the most

important work that can be done for God and for man. He was a man of faith who believed that God answers prayer. He kept a record of his prayer requests and had over 50, 000 recorded answers to prayer in his prayer books. He carried out over 100 Prayer Walks of between five and forty-seven kilometres in towns and cities around the world. He and his team carried out over 57 Prayer Crusades (periods of forty days and nights during which at least eight hours are invested into prayer each day). They also carried out over 80 Prayer Sieges (times of near non-stop praying that ranges from 24 hours to 120 hours). He authored the Prayer Power Series, a 13-volume set of books on various aspects of prayer; Supplication, Fasting, Intercession and Spiritual Warfare. He started prayer chains, prayer rooms, prayer houses, national and continental prayer movements in Cameroon and other nations. He worked with leaders of local churches in India to disciple and train more than 2 million believers.

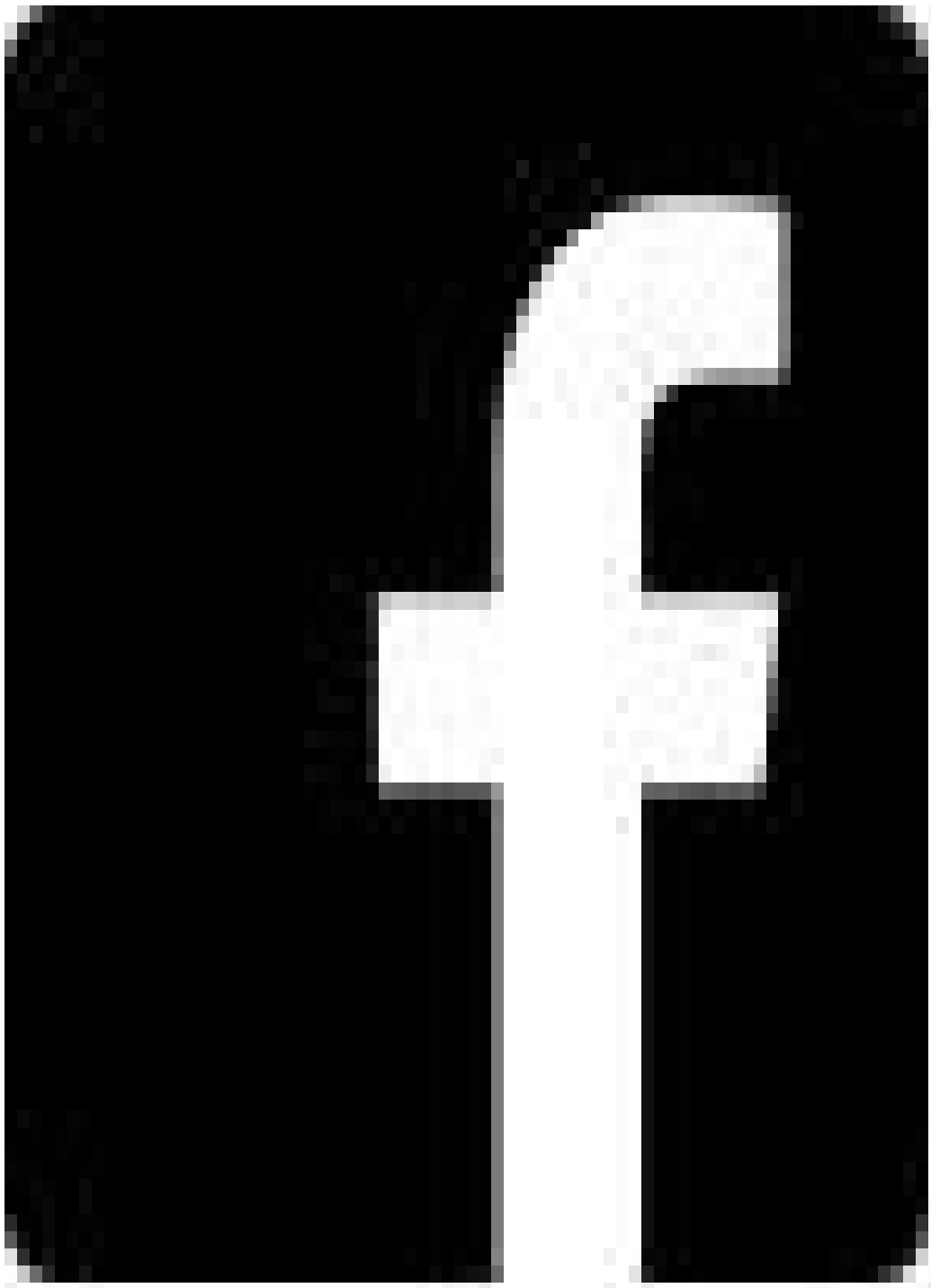
Pr Fomum also considered fasting as one of the weapons of Christian Spiritual Warfare. He carried out over 250 fasts ranging from three days to forty days, drinking only water or water supplemented with soluble vitamins. Called by the Lord to a distinct ministry of intercession, he pioneered fasting and prayer movements and led in battles against principalities and powers obstructing the progress of the Gospel and God's global purposes. He was enabled to carry out 3 supra – long fasts of between 52 and 70 days in his final years.

Pr Fomum chose a lifestyle of simplicity and "self- imposed poverty" in order to invest more funds into the critical work of evangelism, soul winning, church-planting and the building up of believers. Knowing the importance of money and its role in the battle to reach those without Christ with the glorious Gospel, he and his wife grew to investing 92.5% of their earned income from all sources (salaries, allowances, royalties and cash gifts) into the Gospel. They invested with the hope that, as they grew in the knowledge and the love of the Lord, and the perishing souls of people, they would one day invest 99% of their income into the Gospel.

He was married to Prisca Zei Fomum and they had seven children who are all

involved in the work of the Gospel, some serving as missionaries. Prisca is a national and international minister, specializing in the winning and discipling of children to Jesus Christ. She also communicates and imparts the vision of ministry to children with a view to raising and building up ministers to them.

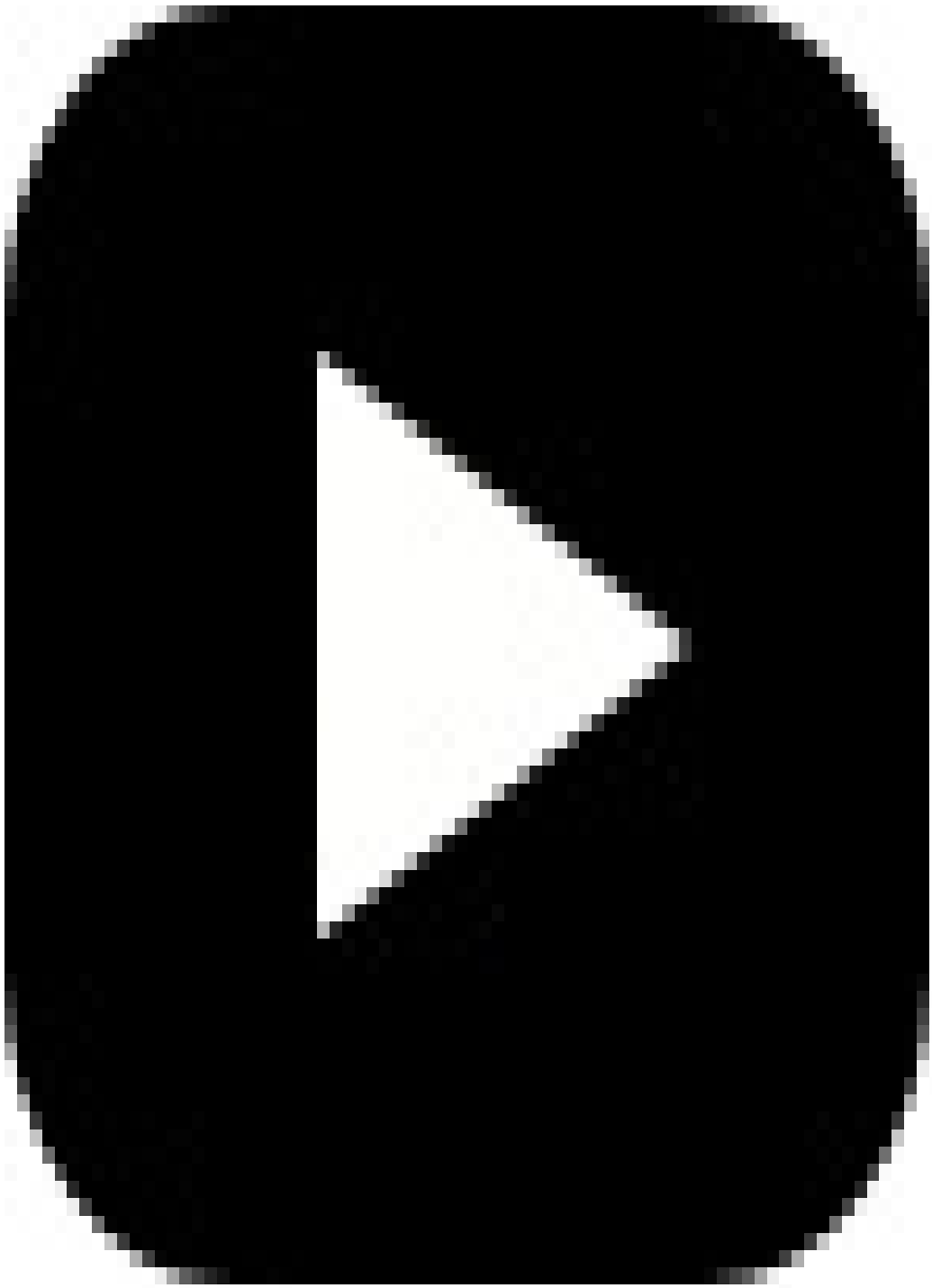
The Professor owed all that he was and all that God had done through him, to the unmerited favour and blessing of God and to his worldwide army of friends and co-workers. He considered himself nothing without them and the blessing of God; and would have amounted to nothing but for them. All praise and glory to Jesus Christ!











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