



Session 1

Moving from External Prompters to the Heart

A Heart-Based Approach to Parenting Touches Children Deeply and for the Long Term

Two Governors of the Heart are:



**Uses of the word
“conscience” in
the New Testament**

John 8:9
Acts 23:1
Acts 24:16
Romans 2:15
Romans 9:1
Romans 13:5
1 Corinthians 4:4
1 Corinthians 8:7
1 Corinthians 8:8
1 Corinthians 8:12
1 Corinthians 10:25
1 Corinthians 10:27
1 Corinthians 10:28
1 Corinthians 10:29
2 Corinthians 1:12
2 Corinthians 4:2
2 Corinthians 5:11
1 Timothy 1:5
1 Timothy 1:19
1 Timothy 3:9
1 Timothy 4:2
2 Timothy 1:3
Titus 1:15
Hebrews 9:9
Hebrews 9:14
Hebrews 10:22
Hebrews 13:18
1 Peter 2:19
1 Peter 3:16
1 Peter 3:21

The Conscience Has Four Parts



**Conscience Part #1:
Do What's Right** —Acts 23:1

**Conscience Part #2:
Deal with Wrongs** —1 Samuel 25:30-31

**PARENTING
STRATEGY #1**

**Tighten
Your Action Point**



ASSIGNMENT

Look for ways to capitalize on the internal promptings your child has. What is your child already doing that's good, right, or helpful?

THEOLOGICAL TRUTH — Salvation

Ultimately God, through salvation, cleanses the conscience. —Hebrews 9:14

Then we have the responsibility to work that out in daily relationships. —Acts 24:16

What if a child's heart is not sensitive to the ways of God?

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Discussion Questions

- 1.** One aspect of the conscience's work is to affirm the person for doing what's right. Read 2 Corinthians 1:12. What is the message Paul is communicating to the Corinthians? How might the idea of the conscience be used with children in a similar way to prompt them to do what's right?
- 2.** Romans 13:5 says that some are motivated externally (fear of punishment) others are motivated internally (the conscience). What are some examples of ways your children are externally motivated? What are some ways your children are internally motivated?
- 3.** One aspect of the conscience prompts a person to deal with wrongs. Read 1 Samuel 24:1-6. Using various translations, describe what happened inside of David. How does this same thing happen to our children and how can we take advantage of it when we correct them?
- 4.** How does your child know when you mean business?
- 5.** If you find yourself yelling or nagging, what are some ways that you can change to tighten your action point?
- 6.** Why is a tight action point important and what does it communicate?
- 7.** Can a parent's action point be too tight?

BIBLICAL INSIGHT ON THE CONSCIENCE

Insight: The conscience points us in the direction of doing what's right and avoiding what's wrong.

Scripture: Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her." (Genesis 20:6)

Insight: The conscience is the place where we are reminded of what we've done wrong.

Scripture: My master will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the LORD has brought my master success, remember your servant. (1 Samuel 25:31)

Insight: Sometimes the things we do wrong are the result of foolishness. A guilty conscience is a painful thing. The solution is to receive God's forgiveness because God takes away guilt.

Scripture: David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. O LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing." (2 Samuel 24:10)

Insight: A clear conscience gives confidence to speak boldly and act courageously.

Scripture: 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)

Insight: It is a worthy goal to work on a clear conscience before God and others.

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

Insight: The conscience helps us deal with honesty.

Scripture: I speak the truth in Christ — I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 9:1)

Insight: We don't just submit to rules to avoid punishment. That's external motivation. We also submit because it's the right thing to do. That's the conscience at work.

Scripture: Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. (Romans 13:5)

Insight: The conscience is a tool for pointing out right and wrong. It doesn't determine what is actually right or wrong. Innocence and a clear conscience are two different things.

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

Insight: A weak conscience is ill-informed. Regardless, it's a valuable tool and requires protection even if it is ignorant.

Scripture: But not everyone 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. (1 Corinthians 8:7)

Insight: A good conscience and a strong faith are foundational for our lives.

Scripture: ...holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. (1 Timothy 1:19)

Insight: A conscience is not cleared by doing good things. It's cleared by accepting God's forgiveness through the sacrifice of his Son.

Scripture: This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper...How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (Hebrews 9:9,14)