

It is imperative for us who are in a helping ministry to realize how seriously the conscience, especially the wrong kind of conscience, affects the spiritual and emotional well being of the Christian. Simply being aware of certain characteristics allows us to evaluate the problem, which is quite often a *conscience problem*.

1. ***Characteristics of a defiled conscience.***
 - a. Doubts
 - b. Guilt
 - c. Self-condemnation
 - d. Self-punishment
 - e. Emotional turmoil
 - f. Self-imposed penance
 - g. Legalism

2. ***Characteristics of a seared conscience.***
 - b. Insensitive
 - c. Unstable
 - d. Callused
 - e. Wrong doctrinally
 - f. Always following the winds of doctrine
 - g. Deceived
 - h. Lack of discernment
 - i. Demonized

3. ***Characteristics of an evil conscience.***
 - a. Makes light of sin
 - b. Rationalizes behavior
 - c. Argumentative, especially to truth
 - d. Calls good evil and evil good
 - e. Tends to categorize sins (big vs. small sins)

4. ***Characteristics of a wounded conscience.***
 - a. Similar characteristics of a defiled conscience
 - b. Doubts
 - c. Questionings
 - d. Insecurities
 - e. Anxiety
 - f. Lacking assurance
 - g. Feeling Inadequate

What about the *circumventing* of conscience? In 1 Timothy 1:18-20 Paul is exhorting Timothy to fight the good fight, keeping the faith and a good conscience.