

## *The Miracle of a Clear Conscience*

Simon Peter was a good guy. He worked very hard as a commercial fisherman, laboring day and night supervising his small fishing boat crew. Bringing up nets filled with hundreds of fish proved back-breaking work, but Peter didn't mind. He was a law abiding citizen of Israel dedicated to home and family.

But one day after witnessing Jesus perform a tremendous miracle, Peter "fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'"<sup>(1)</sup> What was wrong with Peter? Why did he act so uncharacteristically humble in the presence of Jesus? Why did he mention being sinful? Wasn't he an ordinary guy who lived an upright life?

Yes, he was an ordinary guy living an upright life, but that was precisely his problem.

### **The Law of God and the Human Conscience**

God created humans in his own likeness. "God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."<sup>(2)</sup> Since God's law is part of his nature, it was imprinted on the human heart, our inner self. "The requirements of the law are written on their hearts" Scripture points out.<sup>(3)</sup> Along with these divine laws God built into us a conscience. The conscience serves as an inward monitor which reminds us to obey the laws of God written on our inner self. The law of God and the human conscience stand side by side and work together to help us live by the standards he set for human behavior. God's laws reveal to us the will of God; the human conscience serves as a voice deep within us that prompts us to obey and not violate God's commands.

Peter's goodness wasn't good enough. He, like all of us, had broken the laws of God even though his conscience constantly urged him to please the Lord. His guilty conscience filled him with awareness of his shortcomings. Consequently, he didn't feel comfortable in God's presence. "He fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man."<sup>(4)</sup>

Even though every human has broken God's law and ignored the voice of the human conscience, we are not hopeless. God provides a miraculous clearing of our conscience!

### **First Miracle—A Human with a New Pedigree**

When Adam and Eve betrayed the Lord by breaking his law, they became incomplete. Their bodies functioned and their minds continued thinking, but their human spirits died. They were only two-thirds alive and consequently could only bear children who were two-thirds alive. This spiritual deadness weakened their resolve to obey God's law and listen to the warnings issued by their conscience.

Adam, Eve and all their posterity became sinners. “For all have sinned.” <sup>(5)</sup>

Thankfully, God’s love for humanity compelled him to design a miracle we call the virgin birth of Jesus. Since Jesus’ Father wasn’t Adam, Jesus didn’t inherit Adam’s sinful nature and deadened spirit. The Son of God’s conception provided him with a new pedigree. In other words, Jesus was truly human because he was born of a woman, but he inherited sinlessness and a clear conscience from Heavenly Father.

## **Second Miracle—A Human Who Never Broke God’s Law Nor Violated His Conscience**

Even though Jesus came into the world sinless, both Satan and society incessantly pressured him to break God’s law.

“The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me’.” <sup>(6)</sup> After finishing Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, “The devil retreated temporarily, lying in wait for another opportunity.” <sup>(7)</sup> But Jesus never yielded; he never gave away his sinlessness! “In [Jesus] is no sin.” <sup>(8)</sup> Jesus hated sin because he loved God.

Furthermore, love of God prompted him to always listen to the still small voice of his conscience. When his conscience advised him to act in agreement with God’s will, he yielded. Every time the voice of his inner person cautioned him, he submitted to the warning. When Jesus’ life ended he died with a completely clear conscience.

## **Sharing Jesus’ Clear Conscience**

“You must be born again” Jesus declared. <sup>(9)</sup> What is this new birth?

The new birth is a uniting of Jesus’ Spirit with our human spirits. “He who unites himself with the Lord is *one in spirit with him.*” <sup>(10)</sup> By surrendering ourselves to Jesus’ lordship we become one with his Spirit.

The new birth blends the resurrected Spirit of Jesus with our human spirits. He becomes the life energy of our spirits. We become three-thirds alive: spirit, soul, and body. His sinlessness becomes our sinlessness. His clear conscience becomes our clear conscience

His blood that poured forth from his physical body annihilates all our acts of sin. This cleansing away of our sins robes us in feelings of blamelessness. Yes, it’s a miracle—a miracle available to every human who places their faith in Jesus.

Peter’s sense of blameworthiness moved him to earnestly entreat Jesus to “go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”<sup>(11)</sup> The merciful Lord Jesus responded to Peter by saying, “Don’t be afraid.” <sup>(12)</sup> Immediately Peter’s sin was

cleansed and he received a clear conscience. Feeling at home with Jesus, Peter left everything and followed the Jesus who he had previously found so frightening. <sup>(13)</sup>

Here's a word picture of the guiltless conscience God promises. "They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me."<sup>(14)</sup>

Let's confess our sins and experience the miracle of a clear conscience!

1. Luke 5:8
2. Genesis 1:27
3. Romans 2:15
4. Luke 5:8
5. Romans 3:23
6. Matthew 4:8-9
7. Luke 4:13 The Message
8. 1 John 3:5
9. John 3:3
10. 1Corinthians 6:17
11. Luke 5:8
12. Luke 5:10
13. Ibid
14. Ezekiel 39:26

