

05. The Function of Conscience

God's greatest gift to all men in their own beings and personalities is something that we don't think often about. And because we ignore it, it brings a lot of suffering in our lives.

All of us have been born from that first couple, Adam and Eve. And the sinful nature that poisoned, that entered into their system when they disobeyed God, is something that Adam and Eve have passed on to all their descendants. Today, we are all born with this tendency towards evil. We see that in children. We don't have to teach children to be evil. We don't have to teach children to tell lies. We don't have to teach children to do anything wrong. You know as parents what we have to teach children, is to do good. They are born with a tendency towards evil. That is because of that nature which they have inherited from the parents and ultimately from Adam and Eve who sinned.

We see, for example, children basically wanting their own way. Sin is not just external actions. It is far more deep rooted than that. It is an attitude of rebellion against God where I want my own way in life. I want to please myself, and it doesn't matter if other people get hurt in the process. It doesn't really matter what God thinks about it, so long as I please myself. We see that attitude very clearly in little children. Little children will grab and fight, and take things from one another. They are not bothered about other children. They just want to be happy themselves. This wanting one's own way, this stubbornness, is something that is in a child's nature from birth. And as he grows up, he doesn't get rid of that. In fact, as we grow to manhood, we don't really change. We are still the same except that we seek our own in more refined and cultured ways. We just

05. 道德心的作用

我們平時很少去想,那份神給人內在最好的禮物。然而,正是因為我們對它的忽視,給我們的生命帶來了很不幸。

我們都是從世上的第一對夫妻,亞當和夏娃,繁衍出來的。那有毒的罪性,從他們違逆神的一瞬間就進入了他們,並且傳給了子孫後代。今天的我們,都是一出生有向著邪惡的趨勢。從孩子身上我們就能看到。不需要人教,孩子們就知道如何作惡。不用教他們就知道撒謊。你根本不用去教他們如何犯錯。作為家長,我們需要教孩子的,總是如何為善。他們出生就帶著作惡的傾向。那是因為他們從犯了罪的父母那遺傳而來的,並且每個人都可以追溯到犯了罪的亞當和夏娃。

我們知道,基本上孩子們就是想按自己的方式來行為。然而,罪不止是外在的行為。根源要比那深得多。它是對神叛逆的一種態度,我們想要按自己的方式來生活。我想要取悅自己,別人為這受傷害我也完全不在乎,只要我自己高興就好。從小孩子身上,我們可以清楚地看到這個態度。小孩子們會爭搶、打架,從別人手裡搶東西。他們不在意別的小孩兒。他們只要自己高興就好。這種想要滿足自我的意願,這份執拗,是從孩子一出生就有的。長大以後也沒有擺脫。實際上,當我們長大成人後,根本沒有實際的改變。我們只不過是用更加巧妙和講究的方式來做同樣的事。我們只是變得更聰明,變換了方式來給自己霸佔東西。

become cleverer and change our methods by which we seek to grab for ourselves.

So the fifty year-old man and the one year-old child, are basically the same in wanting to seek their own except they seek it in different methods. The barbarian in the jungle, and the cultured, civilized man in the city are both basically the same. The selfishness of the cultured person, his covetousness, and his lust may be covered up with culture and civilization, but he hasn't changed within. And very often, religious people too are the same; selfish within, with an external veneer of graciousness and goodness, but basically, wanting to have their own way. The Bible teaches us that this is the cause of all of our problems - wanting to have our own way.

What is that which God has placed within us which we could say is God's greatest gift to man? It is our conscience. Conscience points out to us where we come short of God's standards. It is not a perfect guide, but it is an initial guide that shows us where we come short. When we are seeking to please ourselves, when we are harming another, our conscience warns us. Particularly the conscience of little children is very tender. It is not easy for a child to tell a lie with a straight face. When a little child tells a lie, we can see it on its face that he is telling a lie. But as we grow older, we kill that voice of conscience so much, that a time can come in our life, where we can tell a lie with a straight face. And then we can say that our conscience has become almost dead.

Now that is a serious thing, because conscience is like a warning signal. It is like pain. Some of us don't realise what a great blessing pain is in our body. It is pain that tells us that something is wrong. If you get

因此五十歲的人和一歲的小孩兒,本質上是一樣的,只是通過不同的方法來實現這個目的而已。叢林裡生活的野蠻人,和城市里生活的有教養的文明人,本質上是一樣的。有教養人的那種自私,貪婪和欲望,只是被表面的文化和教養掩蓋著而已。實際上有宗教信仰的人也經常是這樣的,內裡自私,外在虛假、和藹、善良,但實質上,還是想要選擇自我的方式。《聖經》告訴我們,想要行自我的方式,是我們生活所有問題的來源。

神放在我們裡面的,那稱得上最好禮物的是什麼?就是我們的道德心(即「良心」——向著良善的心)。良心給我們指出來哪些地方不符合神的標準。它不是一個完美的指導,卻是能讓我們看到自己短處的最初的嚮導。當我們試圖取悅自我時,當我們傷害別人時,良心會警告我們。特別是小孩子,他們的良心非常溫柔。小孩子很難用若無其事的臉來撒謊。當一個小孩兒撒謊的時候,很容易從臉上看出他在撒謊。但當我們長大,良心的聲音被扼殺了很多,直到有一天,我們可以若無其事的撒著謊。這時候,我們就可以說,良心已經幾乎死了。

這是一個嚴重的問題,因為良心是一個警告信號。它就類似於疼痛。很多人還沒有意識到,疼痛對於身體而言是個巨大的祝福。是疼痛告訴我們,有什麼地方不對勁了。比如,你的指甲戳在了腳上,你會覺得痛。

a nail stuck in your foot, for example, you feel the pain. That is what tells you something is wrong. And you sit down and pull off that nail; otherwise, your foot would get infected. If something is wrong with your stomach, or in your kidneys, or somewhere, the indication is always pain. Pain is one of the greatest blessings in our physical body. It is because of that we are saved from death many times, or from infections. We are immediately aware that something is wrong.

Now the equivalent of pain in our spirit is our conscience, that troubles us when we do something wrong. Think of those who have the disease of leprosy, what happens to them? Leprosy kills the nerves and destroys sensation in the skin. A person with leprosy can have a nail pierce through his foot, and he won't even know it, because he doesn't have the blessing of pain. His foot would get infected, and he still wouldn't know it, because he doesn't feel the pain. In fact, I have heard stories of lepers whose toes were bitten off by rats in the middle of the night, when they were asleep, and they didn't feel a thing. When they got up in the morning, they found that their toes were missing and there is blood all around. Is that a good state to be in, where you don't feel pain? I hope you realise what a tremendous blessing it is to have pain. Pain is what saves us from losing our toes, or our foot, or our fingers or anything. It is through pain that we know something is wrong.

Conscience is like pain. It warns us when we have violated God's laws. What happens if you ignore its warnings, like many people do? You tell a lie, and your conscience tells you it is wrong, and you just suppress that voice? It doesn't die immediately. But over a period of time, if you keep doing that, finally, your conscience won't trouble you anymore when

這就告訴了你有些地方不對勁。爾後你坐下來把指甲拔出去,不然就可能感染。如果你的胃出了毛病,腎或是別的什麼地方,疼痛經常是一個信號。疼痛對我們的肉體來說是最好的祝福。它讓我們那麼多次遠離了死亡或感染。它會讓我們馬上就感到有哪裡不對勁了。

在我們的靈裡面,良心就相當於是疼痛,在我們做錯事的時候讓我們無法安穩。想想那些得了大麻瘋的人,他們是怎麼樣的?大麻瘋殺死神經,毀壞皮膚的感知。一個得了大麻瘋的人,就算指甲插進腳裡也不會知道,因為他不再擁有「疼痛」這個祝福。腳感染了,可他卻都毫無知覺,因為感覺不到痛。實際上,我曾聽說有人得了大麻瘋以後,半夜睡覺的時候,腳趾頭被老鼠吃掉,卻完全不知道。等到早上起來,發現腳趾頭不見了,到處是血。你覺得感受不到痛,是件好事嗎?我希望你意識到擁有「疼痛」,是多麼巨大的一個祝福。疼痛能使我們不會失去手指、腳趾、腳,或者其它。通過疼痛,我們知道有些地方出了毛病。

良心就好像是痛覺。它警醒我們違反了神的律法(譯者:神是至善的,良心是向著良善的神的心)。當你對這個警告,像很多人那樣置之不理的時候,會怎麼樣?當你說了一個謊,良心告訴你這是錯的,爾後你立刻鎮壓了這個聲音。良心不會馬上死掉。可是經過一段時間,你若總是這樣,最後,你撒謊的時候良心不再折磨你了。別的罪惡也是類似。當你得了靈性上的大麻瘋

you tell a lie. And it could go on with other sins as well. What happens then is that we get spiritual leprosy, and a day will come when you won't feel any sensitivity to sin anymore. That is not a good state to be in. It means you are spiritually dead. We would then become like animals, which have no conscience. A person, who has killed his conscience, descends to the level of an animal, which has no conscience. That is the reason why some human beings, sometimes, behave much worse than animals.

So I hope you realise now, that one of the greatest blessings or greatest gifts that God has given to man in His spirit is the gift of conscience. It tells us that we are spiritually sick, just like pain in our body will tell that we are physically sick or something is wrong inside and we should do something about it to get rid of it. We don't try to ignore the pain. We do something to heal that sickness. In the same way, when the conscience tells us something is wrong, it is God's voice, within us, telling us, 'You are responsible for what you did; what you did was wrong; you need to set it right.'

Jesus once used an illustration. He said that we should keep our conscience like we keep our eyes. You know how carefully we keep our eyes. It is the one part of our body that is bathed many times without even our realising it. Every time our eyelids close, our eyes are being cleaned with tears, and that happens thousands of times in a day. All the dust is being wiped out. Now we can afford to have dust on our body, all over our body, and live for many days. It won't destroy us or our bodies. But if you get even one speck of dust in your eyes, it can damage your eyes very soon, if you don't do anything about it. A small speck of dust is enough to destroy the eyes. That is why God has made the

會怎樣?當有一天,你對罪再也沒有知覺。這情況可不妙了。它說明你的靈命死了。我們就會變成像動物一樣,沒有道德感(良心)。一個人殺死了良知,就墮落到了動物的境地。這就是為什麼有些人有時候,比動物還糟糕。

我希望你們現在能意識到,神給人最好的祝福或說是最好的禮物,就是良知/良心/道德感。它告訴我們屬靈上的不健康,就如同身體的疼痛告訴我們肉體的不健康,裡面出了問題需要解決。我們不會試圖無視身體的疼痛,而是做些什麼去治癒這個疾病。同樣的,當我們裡面聽見良心說哪裡不對了,是我們聽見神在說:「你對剛做的要負責任;你做的是錯的;你需要改正。」

耶穌曾用了一個比喻。祂說,我們需要像保護自己的眼睛那樣去保護良心。你們都知道我們會多小心的保護眼睛。眼睛每天都被清理很多很多次,即使大部分時間我們沒有留意。每次眼睛閉上,眼淚就清潔了眼睛,這每天會發生上千次。所有的灰塵都被清洗乾淨。我們或許可以忍受好幾天全身佈滿灰塵。這不會毀了身體。然而可能只是一顆塵土進了眼睛,若不採取行動,你的眼睛都有可能很快被毀壞了。一小粒灰塵,就足以毀掉眼睛。就因為如此,神造人的身體時,讓眼睛每天都被清理很多很多次。

human body in such a way that the eyes are washed all the time.

Jesus said keep your conscience like you keep your eyes. In the Gospel of Luke 11:34-36, He likened the conscience to the eye. He said if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. In other words, if you keep your conscience clear - what does that mean? That means that when we have done something wrong, we acknowledge it, we set the matter right. If you have hurt somebody you go and ask his forgiveness. If you have sinned against God you confess your sin to God. It is the first step to spiritual health, just like setting our body right whenever we discover pain. It is the first step to physical health. In the same way, conscience is the indication of sin in your body. It is only those who recognise that they are sick who go to a doctor. Jesus once said to certain religious people of His time that He couldn't help them; He didn't really come for them because they were not aware that they were sick. They were so convinced that because they were religious, they were accepted by God. But they were sick as anything.

How was it they were not aware of it? Because they had killed their conscience for so many years, they were not even aware of how distant they were from God. A lot of religious people try to appease God or please Him by going to places of worship, by giving money to the poor, and various other means. But none of these things can cleanse our conscience from sin. The most important thing for us to recognise is that it is sin that has separated us from God. And any amount of good works or money given to the poor, or any types of activity like that can never bring us back to God. If we recognise that we are sick and that we need to be cleansed, and that sin is destroying our soul, we will come to God;

耶穌說,像保護眼睛那樣去保護你的良心。在路加福音 11 章 34 到 36 節,祂將良心比作眼睛。祂說你的眼睛若明亮,全身就充滿光明。換種說法就是,你若保持良心的清潔,耶穌是什麼意思?祂是說,如果在明知的情況下,去做不對的事,我們就要改正。如果你傷害了某個人,要去道歉求得原諒。如果你對神犯了罪,就向神坦白承認你的罪。這是通往健康靈命的第一步,如同每當身體有疼痛,就需要將身體調養。這是身體健康的第一步。同樣的,良心是你身體裡罪的指示器。只有感覺自己生病的人才會去看醫生。耶穌曾說,祂在世時候有些信教的人,祂是幫不了的;祂不是為了那些人來的,因為那些人不知道自己出問題了。那些人深信,因為他們有宗教信仰,就已經被上帝接納了。可他們卻不知道,自己和其他人一樣病入膏肓。

他們為什麼意識不到?因為他們在很多年前,就已經殺死了自己的道德感,他們連自己離神有多遠都感覺不到。很多信教的人通過到處敬拜,或給窮人錢和其它方法,來「安撫神」。但做這些事是沒辦法把罪從我們的良知裡清理出去的。對我們而言,最重要的是明白,「罪」來自與神隔絕。無論做多少善事,給窮人多少錢,或諸如此類,都無法把我們帶回神的身邊。如果我們能看清我們病了,需要清理,看清罪在損害我們的靈魂,那樣我們才會歸向神;我們才會歸向曾來世上赦免我們罪的耶穌基督。《聖經》說,如果我們承認自己的罪——知道自己是罪人——告訴主你曾經的過犯,祂就會原諒你,因為祂曾來到這個世上,為了我們的罪而死。

we will come to Jesus Christ who came to earth to forgive us our sins. The Bible says that if we confess our sins - that means you acknowledge you are a sinner - and tell the Lord what you have done, He will forgive you, because He came to earth to die for our sins.