

Christmas and the Conscience

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The Christmas spirit has arrived! No one has to announce the Christmas season, they just change the music on the radio on the music changes at Wal-Mart. The change of music indicates that Christmas is coming. And when Christmas is coming, there is a lot to do to get ready. Maybe you hear the songs like “Jingle Bells” or “Grandma got Run Over by a Reindeer.” Or maybe it’s something with a religious kick, maybe a carol like “Once in Royal David’s City” or “Hark the Herald Angels Sing.” Before you realize all the songs just remind you of traditions of baking cookies or roasting chestnuts on an open fire? Maybe the songs just remind you of all the presents you still have to buy. Then all of a sudden Christmas is here, then it is all over. The songs stop and then we are into January. This Christmas I want us to consider a boast; the boast of the testimony of our conscience (2 Cor. 1:12). When we think of all those Christmas songs many are filled with words like faith, hope, peace, and joy. All that is because “*the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people*” (Titus 2:11). The authority Scripture teaches Christ was virgin born and conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:27-35). All of the Christmas songs sung by Mary, Zechariah, the angels, and Simeon reflect peace and joy. The Christian conscience friend is the soil in which alone true faith, hope, peace, and joy can grow. In our Western society conscience is in extreme decay; apostasy has taken deep root and hence, just as it always does faith fails, and what follows is moral standards take a nosedive. The prophet’s words are forever true, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!” (Is. 5:20). Because Christ had come and died and rose from the dead- for those who are ‘in Christ’ their consciences must be shaped and sharpened by God’s word. I am afraid those who claim to belong to Christ have neglected to be the salt of the earth and thus, have lost much of proper savour. Are evangelicals noted these days for goodness and integrity? Are we thinking since Christ has come and since I claim to be submitted to His Lordship that there is a certain Biblical ethic that my life must conform to? Are we distinguished in society for sensitiveness to moral issues, and compassion towards those in need? It would do us good this Christmas to consider the conscience. If we claim to be ‘in Christ’, we must remember that Christ lays claim on everything (Luke 11:23). Once, Christians were taught to commune with their consciences daily, in the regular discipline of self-examination under the word of God; but how much of this remains today? (2 Cor. 13:5). A good conscience, said the Puritans, is the greatest blessing that there is. ‘Conscience’, declared Richard Sibbes. ‘Is either the greatest friend or the greatest enemy in the world.’ I can attest to this, and hopefully, you can say the same. There is no greater gift than for the conscience to have peace with God (Romans 5:1). Let us consider the Biblical exhortation of being more holy unto God and our Christmas prayer, “Lord, make me as holy as a saved sinner can be.” May we never be ashamed of Christ or his words, but joyfully bear his reproach, never displease him by unholy imprudent conduct. *MERRY CHRISTMAS.*