

Series: Stand Fast in the Lord

THE FREEDOM OF HAVING A CLEAR CONSCIENCE JOB 31

Text:

Introduction:

In this chapter Job revealed the freedom that he had in his heart because he had a clear conscience.

The fact that his conscience was clear gave him boldness and openness.

He had nothing to hide from God or anyone else and boldly proclaimed his innocence.

In verse five, he stated that if he had lied to anybody, then let the Lord weigh him on scales of justice.

He proclaimed that God knew his integrity.

In verse 21, if he harmed any orphans, then let his shoulder be wrenched out of place and his arm torn from its socket.

Verse 35 stated that if there were accusations against him, he desired they be recorded and he would face them proudly and with the confidence of a prince.

When you look through this chapter, you will find that Job's conscience was clear because he was a man who worked on having a clear conscience.

He was a man of excellent character that would put most of us to shame.

We looked this morning at how Job demonstrated: Self-Control Over His Passions, His Power and Possessions and His Prosperity.

We continue this evening by considering:

Sermon Content:

1. SELF-CONTROL OVER HIS ENEMIES

Job 31:29-30

²⁹ If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him: ³⁰ Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul.

Job controlled his attitude about his enemies when they suffered or were destroyed.

His conscience was clear. He did not rejoice at their destruction.

He did not get arrogant or cocky when his enemies were defeated or when they experienced calamity.

He did not wish a curse upon them or desire revenge.

Job's attitude was a good example of a truth taught by Solomon and the Lord.

Proverbs 24:17

¹⁷ Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Proverbs 25:21-22

²¹ If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: ²² For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

Matthew 5:44

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Thought:

Do you demonstrate self-control over your emotions toward those who hurt, hassle, heckle, or try to harm you or does your anger beckon for revenge?

Romans 12:19

¹⁹ Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Not only did Job demonstrate Self-Control over his enemies but also he demonstrated:

2. SELF-CONTROL WITH HIS PRIDE

Job 31:33-37

³³ If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom: ³⁴ Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door? ³⁵ Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book. ³⁶ Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me. ³⁷ I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.

Job had a clear conscience because he had his pride and ego under control.

He did not try to hide his sins like Adam.

He did not tremble in his home because he feared others who were accusing him of wrong.

Job wanted to present his case and be able to defend himself.

He wished someone would just listen to him.

He would gladly take the accusations against him and confront them with answers before the Lord.

Job was very transparent and upfront about his life.

Because his conscience was clear, he had boldness in facing his accusers or facing the Lord.

His life is a challenge to us to have our pride and ego under control.

If you have done something wrong, then make matters right.

If you are clear of wrong, then kindly, but firmly, present your case and defense.

If you are arrogant, understand clearly that pride will create problems for you if you do not get a handle on it.

It will ruin your life and your relationships with others.

This is why you need to heed Solomon's warnings.

Proverbs 16:18

¹⁸ Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 13:10

¹⁰ Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

Proverbs 29:23

²³ A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Job's conscience was clear. Is your conscience clear with God and with men?

Paul said:

Acts 24:16

¹⁶ And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

Close:

I will close with some thoughts about how to have a clear conscience and maintain it.

1. The Way of God's Salvation must be Chosen

The Lord said that He was the only way to Heaven.

If you want your conscience cleared, you must ask Christ to forgive and cleanse you of your sins and trust Him for eternal life.

This is the first thing you must do.

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

At the point of your salvation, God cleanses your conscience from its lifelong accumulation of guilt, shame, and self-contempt.

No matter what you have done, you will find forgiveness and cleansing in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9:14

¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:22

²² Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Secondly:

2. The Word of God Must Be Obeyed

Once you have become a Christian, then it is vital you make the Bible an important part of your life.

It is your spiritual food and source of strength to do what pleases God.

We are to read it, study it, learn its truths, meditate upon them, and put them into practice.

Psalm 119:11

¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

1 Peter 2:2

² As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Thirdly:

3. Watch and Pray

Proverbs 4:26

²⁶ Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

Matthew 26:41

⁴¹ Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Jesus used Peter's drowsiness to warn him about the kinds of temptation he would soon face.

The way to overcome temptation is to keep watch and pray.

In other words, be alert and aware of the possibilities of temptation.

We are to be spiritually equipped to fight temptation.

Because temptation strikes where we are most vulnerable, we can't resist it alone.

Prayer is essential because God's strength can shore up our defenses and defeat Satan's power.

Prayer also keeps our hearts warm and tender toward Christ.

God wants us to be alert to His leading in our lives.

By watching and praying, we can discern what He is trying to do in us, for us, and through us.

Fourthly:

4. Don't Be Lifted Up With Pride

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹² Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Pride creates complications for us.

It leads us to behave in an offensive way where we will need to clear our conscience with God and others.

It makes us unteachable, rude, harsh, selfish, and insensitive to the needs of others.

When we have hurt others, our pride hardens our heart toward repentance and restoration.

Avoid your pride like you would avoid a nest of hornets.

Job had a clear conscience because he conquered his pride.

Fifthly:

5. Understand the Seriousness of Sin

Romans 4:25

²⁵ Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

One sin brought death upon the human race. It caused Adam and Eve to be kicked out of the Garden of Eden.

Our sins led to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. If we are going to clear our conscience, we need to take our sins seriously and realize the destructive effects it has on our lives and the lives of others.

This understanding will be a deterrent in doing wrong in the future.

Psalms 39:1

¹ I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

Sixth:

6. Avoid Temptation

James 1:14-15

¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The trail from temptation to submission to it to sinful living is a quick one.

Why?

The flesh loves to cater to its desires.

If we are going to maintain a clear conscience, then temptation must be avoided.

If David would have looked the other way when he saw Bathsheba and squelched the temptation he faced at that moment, he could have prevented the heartache of his failure and the murder of a great warrior.

Seventh:

7. Wrongs Must Be Made Right with Others

Acts 24:16

¹⁶ And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

Restitution involves repairing or replacing that which was damaged.

If you have damaged someone's reputation by slandering them, then you need to publicly restore their name because you don't know how far your slander has traveled.

If you have offended someone privately, then you go to that person and seek their forgiveness privately.

If you have done something that has entered the public arena such as a moral failure, then you seek repentance publicly.

You say how far do I need to go with this?

The answer is: You go as far as the ripple goes!

Illustration:

After Zacchaeus met the Lord, he wanted to make restitution with others who were offended by his dishonesty.

Luke 19:8

⁸ And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

Unwillingness to get our life right with people indicates a pride problem and spiritual immaturity.

Eighth:

8. Make Up Your Mind to Do what is Right

Maintaining a clear conscience demands that you make up your mind to please the Lord and live a godly life.

Psalm 119:106

¹⁰⁶ I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

We maintain self-control by doing what is right regardless.

May we be a people who enjoy the Freedom of Having a Clear Conscience.