

Building a Biblical Faith
Lesson 4 – Protect and Nourish Your Faith
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Introduction: We need God's wisdom and help to maintain a Biblical faith.

- A. Jesus warned Peter of the real danger that he could lose his faith. **(Lk 22:31-32)**
 - 1. Jesus later gave great emphasis to the proper feeding and preparation of other Christians. **(Jn 21:17)**
 - 2. We are not surprised to see Peter's emphasis in his epistles. **(2 Pt 1:10-15)**
- B. There is a wisdom that is needed in order to build faith.
 - 1. Consider the example of one who wishes to plant a vegetable garden.
 - a. If he took seed and threw it on the ground, what will he get?
 - b. Does God's seed thrive in any soil? **(Lk 8:11-15)**
 - 2. We can have a strong faith and then neglect it. We must not be overconfident.

I. We must protect the conscience.

A. What is a conscience?

- 1. What is a conscience? "συνείδησις *suneidesis* {soon-i'-day-sis} ≠ AV - conscience 32; 32 ≠ 1) the consciousness of anything 2) the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending one, condemning the other.
- 2. The conscience is a judge based upon previous training. **(Rom 2:14-15)**
 - a. A good conscience will make you feel bad by just thinking of something!
 - b. A conscience can be trained in a wrong way. You may do bad and feel good or do that which is not sin and feel bad! **(Acts 23:1, 26:9; 1 Cor 8:7)**

B. What are the elements of a good conscience?

- 1. The first step is a consciousness of God. **(Rom 1:20-22, 28)**
- 2. We then must have the revelation of God in His word.
- 3. We then find the forgiveness of God! **(Heb 9:9, 14; 10:22)**
- 4. You can know that you have acted properly. **(Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 1:12)**

C. What does it take to find and keep a good conscience?

- 1. Be willing to do anything to keep it. **(Acts 24:16, 1 Tim 1:19)**
 - a. The word "exercise" means: "take pains, labor, strive. Old word in Homer to work as raw materials, to adorn by art, then to drill. Our word ascetic comes from this root, one who seeks to gain piety by rules and severe hardship." - Robertson's Word Pictures.
 - b. Notice the time element: "always." A good conscience is often lost by the "small" compromises!
 - c. The world and also weak Christians will not understand you! They will indeed think your behavior is strange. **(1 Pt 4:4)**
 - d. How many do we know who have compromised their conscience and now teaches and practices things they once never dreamed they would?
- 2. What about those who do not have a good conscience? Their religion is a terror and a burden to them. **(Prov 28:1)**
- 3. Develop an awareness of the presence of God. **(2 Tim 4:16-17)**

4. By being urgent to seek forgiveness for our sins. **(1 Jn 1:7-9)**
 - a. We should also quickly seek the forgiveness of men as well. **(Mt 5:23-25)**
 - b. Let us have the kind of tender heart that will admit wrong and repent!

II. We must choose associates that will build our faith.

- A. The choice of friends will reveal your values as well as your future! **(Prov 27:17)**
 1. Wise men know this! **(Prov 22:10-11)**
 2. Let us consider the example of Jonathan and David.
- B. What made David and Jonathan great?
 1. Men of faith will have occasions in life where their faith stands out. **(Jas 2:18)**
- C. Jonathan's faith caused him to be placed at great risk. **(1 Sam 14:1, 8-10)**
 1. All Jonathan needed to know was the will of God!
 2. This stand of faith would cause a victory for the people of God. **(1 Sam 14:14-15)**
 3. Jonathan's faith caused him to have the right kind of influence!
- D. David also placed himself at risk against Goliath.
 1. Did Saul understand this kind of faith? No, he had turned to a self-centered "faith" which was no faith at all. **(1 Sam 17:32-37)**
 2. David even let Goliath know who was to get the glory. **(1 Sam 17:45-47)**
 3. If Saul had this kind of faith the later bitterness and envy would have not risen up to destroy him. **(1 Sam 18:7-8)**
- E. Why did David and Jonathan become friends? **(1 Sam 17:57-18:1)**
 1. Here were men of faith and because of that they were men of principle.
 2. They made a commitment to the genuine good towards each other that no force on earth could move. **(1 Sam 18:3-4)**

III. We must come to love worship.

- A. God has designed worship as the primary means of keeping our hearts right!
 1. God gives worship a very strong emphasis. **(Jn 4:23-24)**
 2. Our society is ill equipped to learn how to worship!
- B. Our Failure to worship creates weakness and carnality in the church.
 1. Could we come to services and the end result be worse for us? **(1 Cor 11:17)**
 2. What does God see and think about our worship? **(1 Cor 11:27-31)**
 3. Occasionally I hear of a brother who had great Bible knowledge who fell into a web of sin. How did that happen? First look to his worship.
- C. We must have a worship that looks upon God and exposes our hearts! **(Heb 4:12-13)**
 1. What do you think of when approaching God in prayer? The Lord's supper? Singing? Bible Study? **(Mt 15:8-9)**
 2. Proper worship tests the heart! **(1 Cor 14:24-25)**
 3. Many people try to stay busy and avoid their consciousness.

Conclusion: Build a faith that will keep life in proper perspective.

(Psa 73:15-16, 27-28; 2 Cor 4:17-18)

1. Some of the greatest joys you can have is in the midst of uncertainty about worldly things. At that time you can be thankful for the God who never lets us down! **(Heb 13:5-6)**
2. When we get caught up in the temporary things of life we often forget God.