



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. (prchurchofchrist.org)

November 23, 2025

Jump Start # 3890

1 Timothy 4:2 "by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron."

Our conscience is important. It is that inner voice that tells us to do something and when we have done something wrong, it is that conscience that produces shame and guilt. Many have heard the expression 'don't let your conscience be your guide.' That's not all the way true. Your conscience can be a great help to you in your walk with the Lord. Your conscience is like a watch on your wrist. That watch helps if it is working and it is set to the right time. When I travel to different time zones, I don't change the time of my watch. I want to know what time it is back home. Your conscience serves like that wrist watch. If it is working and set to the right time, God's word, then it can be a great help to you.

Recently I went to a professional golf tournament in Indianapolis. I've been to several PGA tournaments, but this was the new LIV series. It's not like the PGA. Rock music blares down the fairways. Players wear shorts. It's a shotgun start. And, there are teams. It was something like I've never expected. We got to see all the super stars of the LIV series. The golf course was packed. It was the largest outing of the American LIV series. And, of course, when you bring a throng of people in, you bring in everything.

I was amazed to hear so many in the crowds dropping the F-bomb in causal conversations. It was everywhere. Young people. Old people. Men. Women. No one seemed to be embarrassed or bothered by that. And, those words just flowed into their conversations. They weren't mad. This wasn't anger talking. It was just conversations.

I thought about the expression in Jeremiah where it states that they did not even know how to blush. How is that some are unable to blush? How is it that some aren't bothered by offensive language? Our verse today explains the "how." Some have a seared conscience. Some have a watch set to the wrong time, or worse, it's no longer working.

(OVER)

Being embarrassed is a good thing. It shows that a conscience is still working. Guilt is a good thing. It shows that a conscience is still working. Shame is a good thing. It shows that a conscience is still working. Some can say anything, and it never bothers them. Some can wear so few clothes and it never bothers them. Some can be rude to others and it never bothers them.

So, how does the watch stop working? How does a conscience become seared?

First, one stops feeding the soul and begins to pay more attention to the world. Some could recite all the words of an offensive song, but couldn't tell you the words of one of our hymns. That tells you where their attention and focus is.

Second, one stops carrying their faith with them. Some, as they leave the church building, leave their faith there. They don't understand that how they act at work, school and in the community is a reflection of their faith and who they are. Spending more time with the world, those sour attitudes and those offensive words don't seem so bad after all. A callous builds upon the heart. They don't recognize wrong. They can recommend a movie without any reservations, never catching that it is laced full of bad language. Bending rules, not manifesting a godly character, common at work and at school. Why? Some don't understand that faith is who we are supposed to be. Anywhere and everywhere, we are to be a child of God. When we haven't grasped that, we leave our faith at the building and act like the world.

Third, some just aren't serious about their faith and some do not see that these things matter. Just love Jesus is all that matters in their book. Heart, character, disposition, attitude, conscience, none of those things seem to matter when a conscience is seared.

The greater question might be, "Is it possible for a seared conscience to become sensitive to the things of God?" Is it possible to get that stopped watch working again? The answer is always "yes." It'll take some doing and some determination. Some changes will be necessary. Separating from sinful influences is a must. Filling your heart with the goodness of the Gospel and surrounding yourself with those who are Heaven Bound is important. Getting that conscience working again is not always a pleasant journey. Shame, guilt and embarrassment often are the result of a working conscience. One will be bothered by things that before he never was. But, also comes confidence, assurance and knowing that you are pleasing the Lord.

I suppose people who talk offensively think that they are cutting edge and are current. Truth be, it shows a shallow vocabulary and they are nothing more than a follower and not a leader. Light shining, as disciples are, points people to Jesus. Being current and "with it," is not impressive when you are walking with Jesus.

Is your conscience working? If not, you need to tinker with it, spend some time in the Gospels, and get it going once more. You need it. It can be a great help to you.

Roger Shouse (Used by Permission)
