

**Devotional Guide**  
*Taking the Log Out of Your Own Eye*

**Monday**

1 Timothy 1:1 - 7

Paul says in this passage that the goal of his ministry is three-fold: to produce love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and genuine faith. The Gospel proclaims the only way to a pure heart is justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. A good conscience can only be obtained through seeking forgiveness of sin. Genuine faith springs from a life free of deception and ulterior motives.

*Think about it:* How do I measure up to Paul's ministry goal?

*Prayer:* For a pure heart, a good conscience, and genuine faith.

**Tuesday**

1 Timothy 1:18 - 20; James 4:17

Failure to maintain a good conscience will lead to shipwrecked faith. A bad conscience happens when we fail to live according to the light God has granted us. If we respond to conviction of sin with repentance our good conscience is restored. If we attempt to silence our conscience our hearts will be hardened and we may begin to challenge the moral teachings of our faith in our to relieve our guilty feelings. Calvin said "Bad conscience is the mother of all heresy."

*Think about it:* Am I currently engaging in any behavior I know is wrong? How do I typically respond when my sins are pointed out? Am I willing to repent?

*Prayer:* For a tender conscience and the humility to admit when I am wrong and respond with immediate repentance to genuine conviction.

**Wednesday**

Matthew 5:23 - 25

One specific (and frequent) sin that leads to a bad conscience is neglecting to be reconciled to those we have wronged in some way. While few disagreements are solely our fault, we need to take responsibility for that which is our fault and take the initiative to seek reconciliation.

*Think about it:* Have I ever avoided seeking reconciliation? Is there anyone on my conscience right now with whom I should seek to restore fellowship? What should I do about it?

*Prayer:* For Grace and Wisdom in seeking reconciliation.

**Thursday**

Matthew 5:25; John 13:34 - 35

At its best, reconciliation means making friends or restoring friendship.

*Think about it:* What kind of feelings and actions are involved in good friendship? Have I ever experienced restoration of a lost friendship? What kind of results can such reconciliation produce?

*Prayer:* For restoration of lost and broken friendships; for the authenticity of our church's faith to be demonstrated in our love for one another.

**Friday**

James 5:16; 1 Peter 5:5 - 6

Reconciliation requires us to acknowledge our sin; this in turn requires humility. We must see our offense through the eyes of those we have wronged, and through God's eyes. We must ask for forgiveness in a way that does not project blame on others.

*Think about it:* Have I ever received an apology that was more of an insult? Are there situations where confession might do more harm than good? Am I willing to humble myself for the sake of reconciliation?

*Prayer:* For wisdom to know what to say, when to say it, and the humility and courage to take the initiative when it is my duty to seek reconciliation.

**Saturday**

Leviticus 5:16, 6:5; Numbers 5:7

If our offense has caused material damage, reconciliation requires making restitution. The Old Testament standard required a 20% penalty above and beyond actual damages— quite a contrast to today's huge damage awards in lawsuits.

*Think about it:* Have I ever suffered material loss because of wrong someone has done me? How vivid and precise is this memory? Does this suggest anything about how important it is for me to make restitution if I have caused damage to others?

*Prayer:* For the humility and graciousness it takes to restore to others what is due to them.

**Sunday**

Acts 24:10 - 16

The Jewish religious leaders were offended by Paul, but not because he had done anything wrong. Having a clear conscience does not mean we will never offend anyone. All we can do is do our best to maintain a clear conscience.

*Think about it:* Can anyone *truthfully* say I wronged them and never did anything to make it right? What do I need to do about that?

*Prayer:* For strength to do my best to maintain a clear conscience before God and before men.