

# On Eagles' Wings Pt 18

by Don Courville

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*Gaining a good conscience is essential for living a life that is pleasing to God and for experiencing boldness and confidence in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 25:30

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:23

**Topics:** "Radio Show"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a good conscience before God and man. He mentions restitution guidelines that help believers make things right with others. The preacher highlights the need for genuine love, a pure heart, and a good conscience in the Christian life. He warns that our lives will be judged by God and challenges listeners to consider how their lives would be portrayed if they were to be opened up and examined. The preacher also emphasizes the need to clear up offenses and restore a good conscience by taking steps to reconcile with others. He references a verse from Matthew 5:23-24, where Jesus instructs believers to reconcile with their brother before offering a gift at the altar.

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## Transcript

Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary, there is no searching of his understanding? He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. We welcome you to own eagles' wings. Again, trust that God will use this to be an encouragement to you.

We're for the pastor that's faithfully preaching the word, the local church, the believer. We want to proclaim Christ as the answer. You need the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior.

If you're not saved, he's the answer. He's the thing that you're looking for. Consider him.

Well, we trust that this program will be an encouragement to you personally. There's so many things going on today, a lot of bad news, and we want to be an encouragement to you. Let God use this to maybe

teach you something you don't know.

You can write us if you want here on eagles' wings, Box 1100, Web City, 64870. We welcome any kind of comment. Well, I've been thinking about ending this year and about our conscience.

You know, the Bible talks about the conscience quite a bit, and I've been thinking, well, it'd be good to finish this year up with a clean conscience, wouldn't it? Be good to go into 1990 with our hearts all clean, and so we should maybe take some time this morning just to give God a chance to work on us in this area of the conscience. The Bible says that a good conscience is what we need. It's a healthy conscience.

What is a good conscience? I believe it's a healthy conscience. It's one that's cleared of offenses toward God and toward men, and I believe if we have a clean conscience, it'll give us boldness and confidence in the Christian life. It's the one thing that'll keep us going during persecution.

The reason I say that is, it may take persecution to bring revival to this land. If you've read anything about revivals, most all of them have come out of troublesome times. I'm thinking of the church in China right now, going through tremendous revival within, but yet tremendous persecution without.

Those people over there have to live clean. There's no hypocrites in the church in China. Paul testified that he lived in all good conscience before God.

He also told Timothy that the goal of the Christian life is genuine love out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned. If God was to open up your life and put it on a screen, and one day our lives will be portrayed on the screen, the judgment seat of Christ is a believer. If that doesn't scare you, I don't know what will.

But if your life was to be opened up right now, this morning, maybe you're heading to church, you're getting ready right now, eating breakfast, shaving, dressing. And if you knew this morning that when you got to church, through some modern technology, they were going to put you in front of this machine and it was going to lay open your life, your thought life, your habits, the places you go, the things you read, the things you said, would it drastically affect you? Or can you say to me, Pastor, it doesn't bother me at all, I've got a clean conscience. That's quite a sobering thought, isn't it? Peter urged the Christians to have a good conscience so that anyone who spoke evil against them falsely would be ashamed.

In 1 Peter 3, verse 16, it would be a terrible thing to have someone accuse you of something, an unbeliever especially, and find out that they're right. The word for good in the Greek is agathos, and it's primarily a word giving it a wide application of meaning, and a good conscience is a strong, healthy conscience. I hope you don't have a sick conscience, or a weak conscience.

And a good conscience can be compared to good ground that's been properly cultivated of the stones and the weeds, and this will produce a good harvest. When I lived out in Wyoming and pastored out there, I helped one of the men in my church who was a wheat farmer, and one of the things I would do is we'd prepare that soil. Well, as a matter of fact, most of your work was preparing the soil, getting it ready, and then you'd make that one-time pass through there to plant the seed.

But all the other times you were running the disk, or you was running the rod weeder trying to get rid of, prepare the soil, you had to bring the moisture up, you had to get rid of those weeds, for sure, have all the weeds out of the way when you planted, because after you planted, you couldn't go back over again and try to get the weeds out. And when the weeds would come up, as they always did, they would come up

with the wheat. And at first you couldn't even tell them apart.

But as the crop grew on, and the wheat grew tall, and then the wheat would turn out to a golden color, there would be those dark green weeds showing. If you got weeds in your life, they're going to show. Maybe right now you're covering them up with makeup, patching them up, like we try to do so many times.

If something breaks, we try to patch it up. But sooner or later, it catches up with you. Be sure your sin will find you out.

We want to just encourage you to go ahead and take care of it right now. It's just like I've got something wrong with my car, I've got a pump out on it, and I keep putting power steering fluid in it, but sooner or later I know I'm going to have to go ahead and get that thing fixed. Well, I just keep putting it off, but I know it's got to be done.

And that's the way we are. We like to put it off. But in the area of sin, it's better to just do it right now.

And that's why I thought it might be good to take some time this last day of the year and get ourselves cleaned up, especially maybe before you go to church this morning. What is a pure conscience, anyway? You know, the Bible tells us in 1 Timothy 3, 9, that the deacons are to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Paul testified that he served God with a pure conscience.

And this Greek word is related to the word chaste. And its primary definition is to be cleansed or purged, free from any admixture which soils, adulterates, corrupts, or defiles. What about it? You got anything in there that's defiling you, a habit you haven't got victory over? This is one of the things that we've seen in the revival crusades that we hold, is that as we give God time in these meetings, and we like to have two weeks, eight days for a minimum, because it takes that much time to break through the old, hardened, callous consciences that we've built up.

But if we'll give God time, we begin to break up, and break down, and break out, and we get our consciences cleansed. We go confess things to others. We take care of things, make restitution.

A pure conscience is not stained with guilt toward God. It is blameless and innocent. It feels really good to be clean.

Now, because of our sin nature, the qualities of a pure conscience are only possible as we have our hearts cleansed by the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9, 14 says, 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? My friend, if you've never received Christ as your Savior, all of your confession and all of your good deeds and all of your church attendance and whatever you do, all those good things, no matter how good they are, aren't going to do you any good until you get under the blood of Christ, receive Christ as your sin bearer. So many people are trying to keep their conscience clean by doing good things.

Well, God's not interested in that. First of all, he wants you to be saved, to trust Christ as your Savior. What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

When you become a Christian, then, you have a pure conscience toward God through the blood of Christ. You remember how clean you felt when you got saved, when you first got saved? I do. I walked out at night.

It felt like everything was fresh and clear and crisp and clean. I didn't know what was going on. I didn't even know I got saved.

All I knew is I felt good, cleansed, forgiven. You need to watch it that you stay this way. Remember Jesus said something to us about our conscience.

He says, Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest, there's that word, rememberest, that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. That's Matthew 5, 23 and 24.

A good conscience is one that allows me to look every person in the eye, knowing that not one of them can point a finger and say, You wronged me, and you never tried to make it right. One of the things that we have in this ministry is we have some restitution guidelines. Maybe I'll share some of these things with you sometime.

Very important to make things right between God and man. Well, it's good to think about these things. It's good to give some thought to them.

I think maybe we'll run a song through while you think over some of the things I've said, and then I'll come back and share a little bit more with you. Think about it. Wouldn't you like to go into the new year with a clean, cleansed heart? Wouldn't you like to feel the freshness of the Holy Spirit living in your life without all the filth of lust? Could I share some steps with you on how to gain a good conscience? You see, introspection is not the way to gain a good conscience.

Just looking within. Through introspection we measure ourselves by what we think is right or wrong. This type of evaluation, by the way, is condemned in Scripture.

Look at 2 Corinthians 10 and 12. In the course of reading Scripture and living the Christian life, the Holy Spirit will bring to your mind offenses which need to be cleared up. This is why, when you have sin in your life, you won't spend much time in prayer and in the Word.

This is one of the reasons our churches are not praying, is because we are so full of the cancerous sin that stops prayer. And if somebody goes over in the prayer meeting and prays too long, somebody else will get upset. We have so structured our churches according to ourselves that I believe the Spirit of God is almost totally out.

As far as practically running the church, we do things. And if things don't go our way, we get upset, we get mad. If someone doesn't do something just exactly the way we think it should be done, we get mad, upset, or we boil inside.

He's to be the Lord of the church. And as a result of sin in our lives, we don't spend much time in the Word. We get plenty of time for ourselves, though, for TV and all that other stuff.

So in the course of reading Scripture and living the Christian life, the Holy Spirit will bring to your mind offenses that need to be cleared up. And when He does, if you don't take care of it, you will just put another layer of hardness on your conscience. When these come to your remembrance, you're then to take the steps to restore a good conscience.

Paul said, herein do I exercise myself. It's an exercise of spiritual discipline, he said, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and towards men. Okay, God may bring to your mind offenses that you have committed against any of the following.

Against Himself, or your father. Or maybe you've committed an offense against your mother, or your child, or your children. Your stepfather, your stepmother, your brothers or brother, your sister or sisters, your relatives.

What about your spouse, husband? Have you said cutting words to her? Or what about to your pastor? Are you pastor to someone else? Or your teacher? Or your friend? Have you committed an offense against your neighbor, your employer? Have you stole from him time or money? Your business associate, have you cheated him and not been totally honest? A store owner, or the government? It might be good to get you a sheet of paper and just write a column down in the first column of this worksheet. List those whom you've offended. And start with the ones whom you've offended the most.

And then work on getting right with them. And what I want to do is take some time to share with you how to do it. There's a right way to do it, and there's a wrong way to do it.

And we might have to get into next week on some of this stuff. But why don't you list their offenses toward you? There are at least two reasons for beginning with a list of offenses which others have committed toward us before we deal with our own guilt. First, we tend to balance guilt with blame.

And therefore we never effectively deal with either one. And there's another thing, too. We usually concentrate more on blaming others than we do on our own guilt.

And we do that because we want to justify ourself. And by writing down why we blame them, we remove a major distraction in dealing with our own offenses. Another purpose for writing down why we blame others is that we can more effectively deal with our offenders after we have taken care of our own guilt.

This is the instruction of Matthew 7, 3 and 5. And why beholdest thou the molt that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, get yourself cleansed first. Then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the molt out of thy brother's eye. Isn't it amazing how we try to go get somebody else straightened up before we've got our own act straightened up? And so what we've got is a church full of people trying to get each other straightened up first without getting out that log out of their own eye.

Now in your good conscience worksheet, after that first project you might have a second project in another column. List the things for which you blame each person in column one. Now in column two, list your offenses.

You see it's easy to minimize our offenses and at the same time blame others or justify what we did. Therefore it would be very wise to begin this next step by asking God to revive our memory. Psalms 139, 23 and 24, something good to pray a lot.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me.

And lead me in the way everlasting. If I were to ask those who are offended with me what I did against them, what would they say? Have you ever gone back to somebody and had them share with you how you

offended them? Or something you did? I did that once. By the way, I don't like to have my thoughts told to me.

I despise it. I can't stand it. But that is the flesh.

I need it. Wives, husbands, be honest with one another. Work with one another in this area.

I thank God that I have a godly wife that is fearless, too, to point out my flaws to me. And she's continually making little statements and things. And I need it because I'm rough.

I'm rough around the edges and rough inside and out. Just like sandpaper. And if I rub somebody, boy, I need her.

She is truly a help me. Now, what did you do that caused others to be offended by you? This thing, you know, you're going to turn me off if you're not really interested in this. I realize that.

That's not my problem. It's yours. But what did you do that caused others to be offended by you? Did you speak words which were critical? Boy, this is one thing I have to watch.

Romans 14 is good. The critical spirit. What about, did you speak some words that were judgmental or slanderous or untruthful or harsh? Have you spoken to someone in a disruptive way or a vulgar or profane or contentious or indiscreet? Boy, Proverbs would really get down to this thing of words.

What about actions? Careless actions. Dishonest actions. Improper actions.

Sensual. Disrespectful. Sloppy.

Destructive. Indulgent. Tardy.

What about this? Do you have trouble with being late? How about wasteful? Hypocritical or unjust or forgetful or disobedient. Whatever it is, write it down. Now, for a third project, from the list above, identify your major offenses toward the one you wronged and write them out in column 3 on your worksheet.

Write them out. Now, next time, if we continue on in this study, if the Lord directs in this area, we'll talk about the attitudes. What were the attitudes that caused your wrong words and actions? And I'll do this by giving you some illustrations of the right and wrong way to try to make something right.

Now, you be very careful about trying to do this in the flesh. Because even if we're just 10% wrong, we want to try to make ourselves look good. But that's not the point.

Remember, Matthew, you take care of the log that's in your own eye, then you can get that splinter out of your brother's. Because the interesting thing is, you think you've just got a splinter and he's got the log, but the fact may be that you've got the log in your eye and he's got the splinter. It's human nature, the old fleshly nature, to try to make ourselves look good by making somebody else look bad.

That's an old, old trick from the pit of hell, covered with slime. Let God cleanse you. Let Him deal with you and lift you up.

Let Him be in your life holiness. One of the characteristics of the early church was holiness. You remember in Acts chapter 5, when Ananias and Sapphira sold some land and tried to get away with making it look like they were giving all of the money to the church? Remember? It says, Peter, it says,

Why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Has Satan got a spot in your heart to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not thine own? And in thy own power, why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and gave up the ghost. And great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the same thing happened to his wife.

She fell down and died too. And the result of that was great fear came upon all the church, and upon many as heard these things. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

And the rest, no man joined himself to them, but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. They had a revival in the church.

People were getting saved because they were letting God be the Lord. There was a holiness in the church. There was a purity in the church.

That's what we need today. When we let go and let God lift us up and bear us on eagle's wings, we'll see people getting saved. But first, they want to see the church getting on fire, burning with a holy zeal, with purity.

How about it? Are you willing to let go and let God be the Lord of your life, the Lord of your church? Let Him bear you on eagle's wings. Let Him cleanse you. One of the things about the grace of God is that it purifies us.

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