

# 1 Timothy 4:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

## Analysis

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**Speaking lies in hypocrisy** (ἐν ὑποκρίσει ψευδολόγων, en hypokrisei pseudologōn)—'through the hypocrisy of liars.' Pseudologos appears only here in the NT—these false teachers deliberately speak falsehood. They're not merely mistaken but hypocritical deceivers.

**Having their conscience seared with a hot iron** (κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν, kekautēriasmenōn tēn idian syneidēsin)—their conscience has been 'cauterized,' branded as a slave or criminal, or seared like skin burned by a hot iron. The perfect participle suggests permanent scarring. These teachers have so repeatedly violated conscience that it no longer functions—they're morally numb.

This describes the false teachers' spiritual condition: deliberate deception flowing from dead conscience. They've suppressed truth so long that they no longer feel conviction. The progression is terrifying: resist conscience → silence conscience → kill conscience. They become skilled liars who feel no guilt, dangerous to themselves and others.

## Historical Context

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In the Greco-Roman world, slaves and criminals were often branded with hot irons to mark ownership or punishment. Paul uses this imagery to describe conscience so scarred by repeated sin it no longer registers moral pain. The Ephesian false

teachers had progressed beyond struggle into hardened deception—teaching error without qualm, using religion for profit without remorse.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What does it mean for a conscience to become 'seared' through repeated sin?
2. How can we guard against becoming spiritually numb to our own moral compromises?
3. Why is deliberate hypocrisy more dangerous than sincere theological error?

## Interlinear Text

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ἐν	ὑποκρίσει	ψευδολόγων	κεκαυτηριασμένων	τὴν	ἰδίαν
in	hypocrisy	Speaking lies	having	G3588	their
G1722	G5272	G5573	G2743		G2398

συνείδησιν

conscience

G4893

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ephesians 4:19** (Parallel theme): Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

**Acts 20:30** (Kingdom): Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

**Romans 16:18** (Parallel theme): For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

**Revelation 16:14** (Kingdom): For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

**Romans 1:28** (Parallel theme): And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

**Matthew 24:24** (Parallel theme): For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

**Matthew 7:15** (Parallel theme): Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

**2 Timothy 3:5** (Parallel theme): Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

**Jeremiah 23:32** (Parallel theme): Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

**Ephesians 4:14** (Parallel theme): That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;