

# Convictions Pt. 5

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[ 0 : 00 ] And I'll say it to start this one, Happy Mother's Day to the mothers in here. Say it again later. It does not apply at all to Gary.

So if you have your Bible, then please turn to, maybe it does now, who knows. Find with me 1 Thessalonians chapter 5.

You can tell Lisa's not here. I can't apply at least. Whatever, okay. So we're in 1 Thessalonians 5 this morning.

Let me catch you up to where we have been studying this Sunday School series on convictions. And we learned already that there are different categories.

It's probably the best way to just say that, different categories for convictions. And the first category that we studied was that there are natural convictions. There are things that you do not need to be taught.

[ 1 : 03 ] You don't need the Bible to describe these certain things. They're innately programmed into your being as a, made in the image of God, I suppose. Your moral nature.

There are things that you do not need to be taught. We showed you a few of them from the Bible. Well, anyway, I won't rehash all of that. But there's natural convictions. The second one, then, were scriptural convictions. Easy as can be.

They're straight out of the book. Black and white. The words of the Bible command and teach certain things that we are to follow. And we, as Bible-believing Christians, develop a manner of life. We develop convictions that we live by because they come out of the Word of God. And we submit to the Word of God. We want to please God, so we obey what He said. And those are scriptural convictions.

They're simple. It's simple to understand that. Now, the third category, where it starts to get a little bit trickier, is what we've been studying now for two weeks. This will be the third, spiritual convictions.

[ 2 : 00 ] Spiritual convictions. These are convictions that are the Spirit of God dealing with an individual about who knows what, whatever he deems fit.

And as I introduced this, it could be to stop you from doing something you're doing in life, participating in, and steer you toward living for God. It could be to try to point you in a direction or get you to start doing something that you haven't been doing.

For instance, have you ever been at a gas, at a restaurant, anywhere, somewhere in public, and you have gospel tracks on you or in your car, and the Lord, you just feel that like that person.

You feel that nudging to give them a track, to hand them a track, or to say something to them.

That's the Lord. That's not the devil. And that's not your flesh saying, hey, let's show everybody how spiritual we are.

That's God trying to move you. And you could be standing in a crowd of Christians. You could be with your family, and they're all saved, but none of them have that thought. That's God dealing with you to do something for him.

[ 3 : 03 ] Now, that's just one example of that. Here's the few things we've studied already, is that spiritual convictions, number one, are personal. That they're individual. And I gave you scriptures, and I gave you great examples of this that show you God dealing with an individual.

And the greatest caution I had there was when you feel like it happens probably more so in somebody who's in front of others, instructing, teaching, or preaching, that God deals with their heart about something in their life, and now they think, oh, this is for everybody.

Now I need to put this on everybody else. And that may not be the case at all. And so discerning between, that's why you want to, that's why it's so, so, so important that the preacher preaches the

Bible, that he feeds you the Word of God, not his convictions, not his personal preferences, not what he feels or thinks.

You need the book. If you're not getting Bible, then you're not getting anything. And so there's a difference between scriptural convictions and spiritual convictions.

All right, now they're personal. I showed you last week that they can be influenced by a preacher or influenced by a spiritual Christian, especially somebody young in the faith. They can be influenced without the Bible, without a passage or a verse, but just seeing a testimony or the life of another individual who is walking with God and walking by faith and spiritually minded, they can pick up some convictions of their own.

[ 4 : 27 ] One could be witnessing. You could go out with a guy who's very good at handing out tracts and talking to people, and you've never been around that in your life, but you feel like, this is good. The Lord is in this.

I can do this. I should do this. And you can pick up a conviction for your own self from another Christian. That's spiritually minded. And I gave you plenty of examples of that. And furthermore, God does call us to be examples and to be end samples to the flock and so forth.

All right, where we ended last week was that spiritual convictions can be developed from a biblical principle. And I showed you a few cases, and I'll give you another one here this morning.

I went to Psalm 101 where David said, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. I hate the work of them that turn aside. And I showed you that David was not talking about the television or the Internet, but that is the only thing I've ever in my lifetime heard that apply to.

While we can apply it that way, and you can say if it's wicked, you shouldn't set it before your eyes. Amen. But I can't preach. It's against the will of God to have a television screen or computer in your home because Psalm 101 says so.

[ 5 : 36 ] It doesn't say so. And so there's a scriptural principle of it's not setting something wicked before your eyes. And then you can develop your own personal convictions, personal, remember, a spiritual conviction from that, but it doesn't mean that it's something that can be preached as doctrine.

So here we are, 1 Thessalonians 5. Let me give you another one. These are spiritual convictions. They're individual from the Lord dealing with your heart about your life. And here's another biblical principle that you can develop some convictions from, verse number 22.

Isn't that the one that covers it all? Well, abstain from all appearance of evil. It doesn't tell you what kind. It doesn't tell you what thing.

It doesn't give you that exact command, does it? The command is to abstain from all appearance of evil. And so from that, God can deal with your heart, and he can deal with my heart, and he can deal with the guy down the street's heart in a different way because his spirit has the ability to do that and the interest in doing that and conforming us to what he wants us to be, not robots, not matching each other, but to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And here's one that a friend of mine over the years has developed from this verse of Scripture. This was a man that grew up in kind of a rough home.

[ 6 : 58 ] His mom was saved. His dad was lost. His dad was a drunk. And just a lot of filthy practices that his dad was involved in. And this young man grew up in that environment, one foot in church, the other foot very much in the world through the polar opposites of the household.

And as he grew up and got right with God and got married and started having a family, he started getting some convictions of his own. And one of them was because his dad took him into all these bars as a child, he decided, I am not going into any restaurant that has these neon signs in the windows advertising beer or alcohol or whatever.

He just said, that to me is evil. It's wrong. He had a history with it. And as he wanted to walk with God and raise his family differently, that's one he came up with. And he said, the Bible says abstain from all appearance of evil.

As far as I'm concerned, that place is evil because it's advertising beer. And so he's not going near it. Now, he could say that. He could even get up in a pulpit and preach that. But he can't say that 1 Thessalonians 5.22 tells you that you can't go into that restaurant.

Now, maybe a bar, that's kind of a different thing, but a restaurant. But that's a personal conviction that he got a hold of. I know a man that, of course, when I was growing up back in Pennsylvania, you had to have a license or liquor licenses.

[ 8 : 25 ] And the selling of booze was not really readily available in the area, in the county at least as I was young, and only at certain places. So grocery stores didn't have alcohol.

The, you know, fast convenience stores, they couldn't sell alcohol. It was only certain restaurants that wanted to get the proof for the license, you know. And so it was very few places that could sell alcohol as a restaurant goes.

And so there's a man that I know that I grew up in the church under that he was a good man. And one thing he was very outward about, he's like, I will never go into a restaurant if they sell alcohol. I will never take my family there.

I will never. And he's not even talking about having, you know, the signs in the windows. He's just saying, if I know they sell it there, I'm not frequenting that establishment. I'm not supporting them. I'm staying away. If another store starts selling it, I'm not going to that store.

And I thought, oh, you know, that's his conviction. And I, you know, kind of liked it personally. I thought, yeah, why would I want to support a place that does that too? As a young man, I thought that sounded good.

[ 9 : 26 ] And then I moved to Florida to go to Bible school and found out that every grocery store and every gas station and every corner has a liquor store, like here, all over the place.

And I thought, huh, I'd like to see him move down here and hold that conviction. He'd be driving to Alabama probably every weekend to get his groceries and gas. And I realized that's a personal conviction that this man holds, but I don't think it would work here.

I think he'd have to, he'd probably change his conviction if he lived here. And I realized that it's a personal thing with him anyway. I remember going, when I was in Bible school, and because I had spent some years in folly and just wasting my life in some sin, I really, there were certain scenes that just I felt I need to stay away from.

Not because I'd be tempted, but just I didn't want any part of it. And for instance, there were some young guys that were in Bible school, about 18, 19 years old. And they were just getting out of the house.

They were good kids. They were Christian. They grew up in a great home. And they were just, you know, anything goes. We can do whatever we want. Because they're, you know, they said yes to God.

[ 10 : 42 ] They're surrendered to his will. And they're in Bible school. And they're just kids being kids in a sense. You know, young men just having fun. And so they all said, oh, we're going to go to this restaurant.

We're going to go there. And then, you know, a bunch of us were going to go from school. And my wife and I, we were married. We were still pretty young, but older than them, a little bit removed from that single lifestyle and, you know, childishness of being out of the house.

And we were going to go. We were going to meet them. And so there was probably about, I don't know, eight or ten of us going to go to this restaurant. And so I had no idea what the place was, but they all talked it up. And so we get there.

And as soon as we started to walk in the door, I just felt this uneasiness. And I said to Carla, I was just like, this is not my style. And it wasn't terrible, but we were walking in the door and then straight in front of us was the big bar island.

And it was dim and it was, you know, just that scene. The music was there. And then the majority of the restaurant sat off to the right. And we walked in and looked over and there were all the guys.

[ 11 : 46 ] Like, you know, just, they didn't, they were, they were so weird. One guy, I don't know, I'm not going to tell you this. That's not, you wouldn't understand. So these guys are kind of wild, but they're just fun.

They're innocent. They're just goofballs. And that's all it was. And so they're having a great time. And we go over and we sit, we have a good meal. We enjoy their fellowship. But the whole time I'm in there, there's just this feeling on me that I don't like this place.

Like, I know what's going on here. I've been in this atmosphere. I know what those young ladies are dressed up for at the bar and the young single guys and just the scene of it all.

It just, like, I don't want to be around it. The spirit involved in it and the, I don't want to say temptation of it, but the atmosphere. It's ungodliness.

Full out ungodliness and flesh and vanity. And it bothered me. It did. Walking into that place, I mean, you understand. And those years of that lifestyle was not too far behind me.

[ 12 : 45 ] And I'm married and happy in the Lord and clean and living right for Jesus Christ. And now I'm walking into this place. It just felt like I was going back a couple years into sin. And these young guys over here just having a great time.

They were totally immune to that. Never tasted it. Never experienced it. It wasn't anything to them. But to me, it was like, I just don't like this. That was a personal conviction inside of me. That was God changing me away from that. To them, they were oblivious to it. They didn't need any conviction about it. It was nothing. And so that kind of verse there means one thing to me. And it can mean something completely different to you. So what is that, though? That's a personal conviction. A spiritual conviction that can be developed from a biblical principle. And it depends on where you are in your Christian life. It depends on what level, if you want to call it that, of growth that you have with the Lord. And what your life convicts of or consists of to determine what God's going to convict you of.

[ 13 : 49 ] So I think I made the point clear enough. And I want that to be really all we get across here. is that scriptural or biblical principles can guide you into developing spiritual convictions.

But they're not necessarily for everybody. I can't preach to everybody not to go there because you're outside the will of God. Or it's sin there. So I can't say that to you.

All right. So one more thing. And then we'll be finished with this section on spiritual convictions. And this is the fifth and final. Oh, no. There's a fourth one. I missed the fourth one. This is pretty important.

The fourth thing on this is that these convictions, spiritual convictions, God dealing with your heart, are given by God to you for a purpose, for a reason.

It's not just kind of on a whim or random. It is not to transform people into being like you or for a preacher to purify his people and make his church a showroom of saints.

[ 14 : 52 ] These convictions are for God to transform you into Jesus Christ, to showing Jesus Christ in your life, and for God to be glorified in your life.

Look at Acts chapter 16. I want to give you an example to back this up, that spiritual convictions are personal, and they're given for a reason, for a purpose of God trying to do something.

And that something could be in you, as in to you, or it could be through you. But it's the Lord seeking to use you or work in you in some fashion.

So here's an interesting situation. Acts chapter 13. I'm sorry, 16. And take a look at the first three verses here. Paul does something that seems to be totally against his nature, against his preaching. Why is he doing this? Verse 1. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple was there named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewish and believed. But his father was a Greek, which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

[ 16 : 07 ] Him would Paul have to go forth with him and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters. For they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Paul has Timothy circumcised. Why? Look back at chapter 15. There's this council here in chapter 15. And Paul is there in verse 12.

Paul and Barnabas. And you've got Peter and James. And James gets up and kind of gives his sentence here. And just come to verse 24. And so in this crowd, they establish some things doctrinally.

In verse 24. For as much as we have heard that certain which went out from us, they're Jews, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying you must be circumcised and keep the law to whom we gave no such commandment.

So then why is Paul taking Timotheus, Timothy, later he calls him his own son after the faith. Why does he take him and have him circumcised?

[ 17 : 12 ] There's something strange there. Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 9. Get a little better understanding of what Paul's thinking. 1 Corinthians 9.

Remember, this is an example of a spiritual conviction given by God for a purpose. And the purpose is not to turn people into you.

But the purpose is a working of God in some way. And this is 1 Corinthians 9. I want to begin in verse 19. And watch carefully this passage. Paul says this.

For though I be free from all men, that means he's a free man, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more.

So he's a free man, but he's making himself something that he's not for a purpose, to gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew. How do you become as a Jew?

[18:10] Not a Jew. Even though he is one. But unto that nation, whom now he is part of the body of Christ, although they're his kinsmen after the flesh, he became as one of them.

Meaning he submitted himself to their rituals, their religious customs, those law-keeping and abiding practices. To where in their mind you are unclean if you don't keep this, if you have any dealings with the Gentiles.

So what did Paul do when he came back to Jerusalem in Acts 18, 19? Or a little bit later, he put himself under a vow of purification, like I was with Gentiles.

And so coming back to you Jews, I'm going to follow through with your cleansing rituals and purification so that I can now have fellowship with you. Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews.

To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law, like Gentiles, as without law.

[19:14] He's like, I don't go to the dope smokers and smoke dope with them to try to witness to them. He's not saying I'm not living for God. He puts in parentheses, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.

That I might gain them that are without law. Just speaking of Gentiles. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. So the apostle Paul, in order to be effective in reaching the Jews for Jesus Christ with the gospel, he took Timotheus and had him circumcised.

He himself submitted to the law and the purifying and the vow that he had in Acts. But understand, in his gospels and in his messages, he never one time preaches circumcision.

Never. And it's clear then, by studying this out, why he had Timotheus circumcised. Now, what's this have to do with these spiritual convictions? Well, they're given for a purpose.

[20:22] And to make this personal, God may ask you or deal with you personally in a way that doesn't apply to others, but he's seeking to use you to reach others.

That could be very much the case, just like it was here with Paul. Let me give you an example. And this is totally meant to be generic, okay? So don't try to think of a name or a person that you know. But let's just talk about a missionary, any missionary that goes to start a church on a foreign field. I know you have some understanding of this, and you've seen, I'm sure, over the years, some videos and some evidence of what it's like on foreign fields, from Africa to Papua New Guinea to the Far East, you name it, South America and certain jungle even villages, some remote areas.

Say this missionary goes to start a work for Christ on the field, and this missionary has a wife, and that wife at this new place and community and new church that they've started is looked up to by the ladies of the congregation.

You would expect that. She's looked up to as a leader, as a, you know, not just a helper to the husband, but just as a spiritual role model. That woman's going to be careful to keep her testimony in that church as well as to the public in that nation because of the reason that she left her home with her husband and family to go and to minister for Jesus Christ.

[21:50] She's going to be really careful to guard her testimony more so than she would if she's living here in America, I'm sure. And God may deal differently with that woman in her personal and in her spiritual convictions than he would with, let's just say, some teenage girl that rides a bus to church and goes to a department for teenage girls that ride a bus to church.

God may be dealing from his spirit more personally and in a different way for a different purpose with the one woman than he does with another because he's got, there's something, I don't want to say different levels, but there's different workings of God in their life at this stage, in this moment. And so we can understand that God will give that one woman certain convictions about how she is to carry herself and to live and to be seen about her testimony that this other girl who is probably just unnoticed would never even conceive.

And it would be foolish for a man to stand up and preach at the teenage girl saying, you need to conform to this. And that doesn't apply to her necessarily at all. Come to 1 Corinthians 10.

God very well can deal differently with different people because he has different purpose for them. And I'll say this as well, for that, say that missionary woman on the field, I'll bet you she has different convictions being on the field than she does if she was just a member of her home church.

[ 23 : 17 ] And you might say, well, shouldn't she live to the glory of God and do all to the glory of God everywhere you go? Well, of course. But these are personal convictions that God will put on somebody or her in this case when they're in a different place, in a different position.

And probably next week, just keep that thought of the missionary on a foreign field in a different culture in your mind because that's going to come back next week in another category as we discuss something else.

Right. 1 Corinthians 10 and look at verse 23 and 24. Paul says this, All things are lawful for me. I can do anything I want. But all things are not expedient.

All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. And here's his conclusion then. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. So the things that aren't necessarily wrong for me to do as a Christian, I still have to keep in mind I have a testimony before the lost world and before other believers.

And if it's something that may cause them to stumble, if it may not edify them and be expedient for them, then I better back off of it and not use my liberty in the wrong way.

[ 24 : 29 ] All right. Now look at 1 Corinthians chapter 8. I have to consider the convictions of others or the, I guess, the conscience of others in some cases over my liberty that I have in Christ.

That's a mark of a mature Christian. 1 Corinthians chapter 8 and look at verse number 9. 1 Corinthians chapter 9.

There's a problem here. Even though you're doing nothing wrong in your actions, and they're doing nothing wrong against God or the word of God, but because they're weak in the faith, their conscience, they don't have the understanding.

Like, you have knowledge, it says. So you know that the same steaks that you can buy at the butcher, you can bring home on your grill and feed to your family, and it's praise of the Lord.

And the same steaks at the butcher can be purchased and taken to the temple of idols, and on that grill be sacrificed and offered to idols. And we have knowledge.

[ 25 : 59 ] It's the same meat. No curse happened. It's not ungodly or unclean. Nothing happened at all. We have that knowledge. We could eat that one or that one or whatever one we want to eat, and it's not going to defile us.

But the one that's weak in the faith and doesn't have that understanding feels like, I shouldn't be eating this because this is not from God. This is with this idol, and idolatry is wrong, and he associates the meat with the sin, and therefore it's an inner struggle and problem.

But then he sees you eat, and it says, oh, well, then it's okay. And then he ends up defiling or uses the word perish. His conscience perishes. Verse 11 says, through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish.

Now, he doesn't die and go to hell. That's not the word perish or die physically. It's about his conscience. Verse 12. But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. So these are in the context of having spiritual convictions and God giving them to you for a purpose.

[ 27 : 13 ] And you have to be careful that it doesn't affect others, that your testimony is one that's not going to hurt others. You've got to have, they say take the high road, that kind of thought process of walking the high road when you have a choice.

And that would be good advice when it has to do with your testimony and realizing that this is affecting others. They're looking up to me, and I know I'm not sinning against God, but they don't know that.

And so I'm going to have to take the high road, so to speak. God will give a personal conviction to you for a purpose. And we'll see this next hour, but in Genesis 22, God told Abraham to go sacrifice his son on Mount Moriah.

You know what he did? That was for a purpose. And that was personal. Now, did Abraham have the right to stand up to every man in that community and say, All right, guys, God told me to sacrifice my son.

Get your boys. Let's go. Follow me. How out of bounds would he be? It's a personal thing, and it was for a purpose. And it could be God puts a conviction on your heart about your life, and it could be that he's just testing you like he was Abraham.

[ 28 : 22 ] He's checking you out. It has nothing to do with your family. It has nothing to do with anybody else in church. It's a spiritual conviction from God testing your heart. That's all it could be.

And so it's important to see this and to understand the categories. And here's the biggest problem with these spiritual convictions is because they're from God, because the Lord's dealing with your heart, because they could come from a scriptural or a biblical principle, we automatically think, well, God and the Bible are inseparable, and therefore this has to be the truth.

This has to be from the Lord. It has to be Bible. We want to put it in there, and then therefore if it's in there, it's from everybody. And you can't really put it in there. You can't really pull it from there and say this is, God showed me this.

This is a biblical command. I'm trying to give you the distinction here. I'm using some somewhat generic and somewhat pointed illustrations and examples of this so that you get it, that your eyes are open to this.

I hope it makes sense to you. That some things come straight out of the book, and you obey it as from the Lord, from the scriptures. But some things, it's just God dealing with your heart from a still small voice and his spirit moving in you and trying to grow you for a purpose that he has for you.

[ 29 : 32 ] It has nothing to do with anybody else. All right, I think I can finish this part this week, so let's do that. But let's go back to 1 Kings.

I'm going to skip something here to wrap this up. I'll say one last thing in conclusion to the spiritual convictions, and it's an easy one, and that is spiritual convictions, I believe, can be imitated or counterfeited.

And I won't say it's always the devil, but if you want to study a study on counterfeits, you can put a huge list up of what Jesus Christ is or has and what the devil has from the Bible.

And you can see a list. There's a satanic trinity. God's a trinity. He has a throne. He has a religion. He has a seat in Revelation. There's so much.

It matches the Lord Jesus Christ. He's got abilities with signs and wonders and miracles. He's got Bibles out there today. He's got a false Christ. He's got false apostles and ministers and on and on and on.

[ 30 : 37 ] And he counterfeits everything. Why wouldn't he counterfeit convictions? Why wouldn't he counterfeit a spiritual conviction that comes from God's, the Lord dealing with you, transforming you into what he wants you to be?

Why wouldn't Satan use convictions to deceive you and distract you and confuse you and mess you up? I sure think he does.

And I just, when you learn this, your eyes are open to it, you become sensitive and you really start to do what John says, try the spirits, whether they are of God.

He says, hereby you know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. And that stuff's real. And in 1 John 4, this is what I was skipping, he says in I think it's verse 1 that there are false prophets going out into the world.

And it's in that verse where he talks about the spirits and try the spirits for there are many false prophets. In plainer words, it's the false prophets that have the spirits that are, they're not trying to get you to sin in the carnal worldly sense.

[ 31 : 42 ] They're trying to steer you into religious, something abominable or something against God. And you perceive it as godliness or righteousness. Here's an example, 1 Kings chapter 22.

And I think you know the story here of King Ahab and Jehoshaphat joining together to go out to battle. And there's a war between Syria and Israel and Jehoshaphat from the south.

King of Judah comes up to join, which you never should have. And anyway, they want to see if God's in this thing or not. So in verse number 6, they inquire at the word of the Lord.

And verse 6 says, Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about 400 men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

That's a pretty powerful voice to have 400 prophets all in agreement and giving God the glory and the credit, saying he is going to do a work.

[ 32 : 45 ] He is powerful. He is stronger than the king of Syria. The Lord Jehovah will conquer your enemies. And all of this wonderful sounding message. But it's not. Matter of fact, I shouldn't say Jehovah, because in verse 6, it's not the capital L-O-R-D.

And that one shows up in verse 7. That's the one that Jehoshaphat wants to know. Is there a prophet here of the Lord, of Jehovah, besides? And so anyway, there's a situation here. And God is behind this lie, as you see later in the chapter. In verse number 23, just fast-forwarding through this.

Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee. And now, you know, underlying all of this, God has got his hand against Ahab, and he's not going to let him get away with this.

And so he puts a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets. It kind of matches the false prophets in 1 John chapter 4. And the false apostles and the spirit that's a spirit of error and not a spirit of truth.

[ 33 : 56 ] But these are preachers. And they're responding and acting onto a belief that they have, a conviction that they perceive to be godly and of the Lord, and they don't realize it's a lying spirit sent from God to destroy this king.

What I'm saying, though, in this case, it's of the Lord, but I'm saying I believe it just as much as it's of the Lord. It can be of the devil to confuse and to imitate a work of God in your heart.

He can put it, he'll put it on, God will put it on you like this much, that I want you to stop that, and the devil will put on you this much. And say, no, all of it. And he'll push you and push you and push you till you break.

Or he'll get in your mind and try to get those wheels turning so fast that you burn out, you can't possibly keep doing this. It's not the Lord. The Lord gives you a conviction to take a step of faith this direction.

The devil says, no, take 10. Show them that you're really in this. Remember in Matthew 4, it was the devil that told Jesus to take a step of faith off of the pinnacle of the temple.

[ 34 : 58 ] It wasn't God telling his son to do this and I'll catch you. It was the devil trying to convince him to do something by faith of the Lord. Give him a scripture. He'll keep thee in all thy ways.

So how do you discern this? There could be some imitation convictions or some counterfeit convictions, and it could be the devil putting pressure on you. I'd say the, I've got to close here, but I'd say prayer helps a lot.

Prayer helps a lot. If you spend some real time in prayer over the thing, I believe it's, God doesn't want you to be confused. God, it's like the layers will start to come across and be unmasked and you'll be able to see through to light.

You'll get light when you spend time in prayer. Knowing your Bible is going to help a lot too, but that's not alone going to be the thing that gets past it. The devil knows your Bible too.

And where you have a verse, he could have another verse against it. So be careful there, but prayer is probably the best thing you have. And then the third thought about this is don't react quickly to your thoughts, to your convictions.

[ 36 : 04 ] Don't react right away to them, but put some prayer on them and try to discern, is this of the Lord? Lord, would you have me take this step? God is never in a hurry. Show me where he's in a hurry.

And you're dealing with your lives. It's super rare, if ever, that God is trying to say, come on, now, now, now, now, now, now, now. It's got to be now. You're going to miss it. God is removed. He's patient. He's tender. It's that still small voice. He guides. He doesn't push. And so that's something that can help you in discerning the counterfeit convictions, we'll call it.

So we'll stop there. That's going to put an end to the spiritual convictions category. Next week, we're going to get to the fourth category, which is psychological convictions.

And I want to show you that some things are just plain in your head. They're just in your head, and you think they're right. And I want to show you that you might be right, and you might be wrong, and it might not matter at all.

[ 37 : 05 ] It might not matter at all. But to you, you're convinced it has to be this way, and you're going to say it's in the Bible somewhere. And it's not. And it's just the way you were raised. And I'll show you that.

And it's another category of our convictions, what we live our lives by. And it's enlightening. So be back next Sunday morning. All right, let's take a 10-minute break. By the way, if T-shirts came in, if I

didn't...