

A Little Bit More Conviction

Introduction:

Before God can take us where He wants to take us, we must agree with Him that we are where He says we are.

Conviction: The convincing of the Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit convicts us, we begin to live in reality. We become convinced of our true, sinful, dysfunctional condition.

Key things the Holy Spirit must convict us about:

We must be convinced that sin is wrong.

Conviction is needed when we are comfortable with sin.

We often only want to be as righteous as we have to.

ILLUSTRATION:

- The story is told of a shoplifter who writes to a department store and says,
- "I've just become a Christian, and I can't sleep at night because I feel guilty. So here's \$100 that I owe you."
- Then he signs his name, and in a little postscript at the bottom he adds, "If I still can't sleep, I'll send you the rest."

We often try to minimize, excuse or explain away our sin.

ILLUSTRATION:

Once, when a stubborn disputer seemed unconvinced, Lincoln said, "Well, let's see how many legs has a cow?" "Four, of course," came the reply disgustedly. "That's right," agreed Lincoln. "Now suppose you call the cow's tail a leg; how many legs would the cow have?" "Why, five, of course," was the confident reply. "Now, that's where you're wrong," said Lincoln. "Calling a cow's tail a leg doesn't make it a leg."

How do we do this?

- "Well, that's just how I am."
- "God understands I am human."
- "Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven."

Hebrews 10:26-31 NKJV "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. (28) Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. (29) Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (30) For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." (31) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Jeremiah 8:4-7 MSG "Tell them this, GOD's Message: "Do people fall down and not get up? Or take the wrong road and then just keep going? (5) So why does this people go

backwards, and just keep on going--backwards! They stubbornly hold on to their illusions, refuse to change direction. (6) I listened carefully but heard not so much as a whisper. No one expressed one word of regret. Not a single "I'm sorry" did I hear. They just kept at it, blindly and stupidly banging their heads against a brick wall. (7) Cranes know when it's time to move south for winter. And robins, warblers, and bluebirds know when it's time to come back again. But my people? My people know nothing, not the first thing of GOD and his rule.

We must be convinced that God must be first. Conviction is needed when God is not the first priority of our life.

Matthew 24:12 NKJV "And because lawlessness will abound (literally: increase), the love (Greek word: Agape – Divine love – Love of and from God) of many will grow cold." (literally: forced respiration – cooled by blowing)

- † Daily time in prayer and the word is based on convenience.
- † God is merely a part of our life
- † When this happens, compromise is inevitable.

ILLUSTRATION: The European Shrew.

- † The Shrew has a beautiful white coat that is very valuable to hunters.
- † Hunters will wait until the Shrew is out of its hole.
- † Then they smear the hole with mud and filth.
- † The Shrew will not go into its hole but will turn and fight. It will die before it soils its coat.

This is the attitude we must have with God.

Psalms 19:12-14 NKJV Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. (13) Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression. (14) Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Conclusion:

ILLUSTRATION: Dr. Sessleweis.

- † 80+% of women during his time died from child bed fever
- † Dr. would come from autopsies to deliver a baby and never wash.
- † Dr. Sessleweis was the first to associate the two practices.
- † 183 deliveries - he lost 18.

Gentlemen, I am not asking for anything earth shattering. I'm am just asking you to wash your hands!

Psalms 139:23-24 ESV "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! (24) And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"

Self Inventory With God:

- † Find a place alone with God.
- † Ask Him to search your heart.
- † Ask Him to show you any area in which you have been disobedient or have not put Him first or both.
- † Confess it, Repent of it and ask Him to forgive you.
- † Give it to Him, Let it go and receive His forgiveness.
- † Commit yourself to Him again and allow Him to transform this area of your life.