

Ethics and Convictions

Uriah: A Man of Conviction who Possessed Ethics

King David, the Kingdoms most famous and well-known King had severe character faults. The worst was his moral failure as a leader in II Samuel 11 when he engaged in an immoral, adulteress affair with Bathsheba, his greatest failure and sin. This was the worst period of time in David's life and Kingship.

Bathsheba's husband was a man of great conviction and unshakable ethics in stark contrast to David's pathetic failure. After King David committed adultery with Uriah's wife Bathsheba, she became pregnant. King David sent for Uriah, who was with the Army of Israel fighting the people of Ammon, to return home for a few days. David had a devious, demonic plan that Uriah would return from the front lines, visit and be intimate with his wife, who would then later believe that it was his child in her womb not David's. King David's character flaw, coupled with a lack of conviction and ethics resulted in one sinful mistake after another! King David's plan was to deceive and lie his way out of trouble by simply getting Uriah to enjoy a day or two at home with his wife. A strong Kingdom conviction would have prevented this or at least he take accountability and confess and repent of what he did!

This wasn't to be the case. Uriah proved to be a better man than David. He refused to spend time with his wife. His convictions wouldn't let him. His ethics were too clear and strong for him to do such a thing. We learn from both Uriah and David about convictions and ethics:

- 1. Uriah's conviction and ethics compelled him to submit and obey Joab, his authority and commanding officer, even when he didn't understand his orders**

II Samuel 11:6-7. David sent this order to Yo'av: "Send me Uriyah the Hitti." Yo'av sent Uriyah to David. ⁷ When Uriyah had come to him, David asked him how Yo'av was doing, how the people were feeling and how the war was going.

- 2. Uriah's convictions and ethics caused him to sleep with the king's servants instead of in his own home, choosing humility instead of exercising his personal rights:**

II Samuel 11:8-9. Then David said to Uriyah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." Uriyah left the king's palace and was followed by a present of food from the king. ⁹ But Uriyah slept at the door of the king's palace with all the servants of his lord and didn't go down to his house.

- 3. Uriah's convictions and ethics prevented him from enjoying the pleasures of intimacy with his wife when his fellow soldiers were sacrificing their lives on the battlefield:**

II Samuel 11:10-11. When they told David, "Uriyah didn't go down to his house," David said to Uriyah, "Haven't you just arrived from a journey? Why didn't you go down to your house?" ¹¹ Uriyah answered David, "The ark, Isra'el and Y'hudah stay in tents; and my lord Yo'av and the servants of my lord are camping in the countryside. So should I go into my house to eat and drink and go to bed with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

4. Uriah's deep convictions and ethics were motivated by his trust in Adonai and his sense of loyalty, justice, obedience, and duty. He could not rest while the ark of God's covenant remained in temporary shelters and his comrades were still fighting:

II Samuel 11:11. Uriyah answered David, "The ark, Isra'el and Y'hudah stay in tents; and my lord Yo'av and the servants of my lord are camping in the countryside. So should I go into my house to eat and drink and go to bed with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

5. Uriah's strong convictions and ethics enabled him to obey the king without questioning the situation.

II Samuel 11:12. David said to Uriyah, "Stay here today also; tomorrow I will let you leave." So Uriyah stayed in Yerushalayim that day and the following day.

6. Uriah's convictions, ethics, integrity, and honor remained even when he was drinking, as he remained with the servants instead of returning home. Even an inebriated Uriah was a better man than a sober David:

II Samuel 11:13. David summoned him, ate and drank with him, and got him drunk. But in the evening he went out and lay on his bed with his lord's servants and did not go down to his house.

7. Uriah's convictions and ethics, his integrity, and honor kept him from reading or altering the letter he carried back to his commander, a letter that contained his own death sentence

II Samuel 11:14-15. In the morning David wrote a letter to Yo'av and sent it with Uriyah. ¹⁵ In the letter he wrote, "Put Uriyah on the front lines of the fiercest fighting; then pull back from him, so that he will be wounded and killed."

What a horrible failure of immorality and adultery by King David, who really should have been with his troops to begin with! His character flaw resulted in an immoral pregnancy that he tried to cover up through lies, deceit, which ended in his murder of Uriah by his order, who proved to be the better man....

Convictions are the Foundation of ethics. Uriah's ethics were the fruit of his deep, strong, personal, kingdom convictions. He wouldn't have been wrong or broke any law by spending time at home; in fact, he would have been obeying his king. But Uriah's convictions guided him in what was right and wrong. For ethics to have any staying power, they must be birthed from deep, personal convictions. In fact, the strongest ethics come out of conviction:

- 1. Integrity (My ethics result in integrity: Being honest, possessing strong, biblical moral principles. Doing the right thing when no one is watching)**
- 2. Justice (My ethics must pursue justice for all.)**
- 3. Excellence (My ethics must revolve around a spirit of excellence.)**
- 4. Service (My ethics must revolve around contributing to the welfare of others, serving and loving our neighbors as our self.)**
- 5. Convictions (My ethics are the result of deep, strong, biblical convictions.)**

If our ethics are not forged from deep, biblical convictions, they will shift and change with the shifting tide culture, emotions, or settle for what is convenient. When our ethics are formed out of deep, spiritual, biblical convictions, they are steadfast and resolute. I have a biblical standard that is transcendent beyond my personal preferences.

The term conviction is a common term within the greater body of Messiah. Conviction is also what you experience when you have sinned against God. The Holy Spirit will bring conviction of sin and inappropriate, immoral behavior.

Conviction as defined in Webster's: The act or process of finding a person guilty of a crime especially in a court of law, the act of convincing a person of error or of compelling the admission of a truth, the state of being convinced of error or compelled to admit the truth, a strong persuasion or belief, the state of being convinced.

Conviction describes the work of our conscience regarding decisions between right and wrong in all areas of our lives, biblically! A conviction is a convinced conscience of wrongdoing. Yeshua said this concerning the soon giving of the Ruach HaKodesh:

John 16:8 (TLV). "When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment:

This is a critical area of understanding. The Ruach HaKodesh, Holy Spirit came to bring conviction of both sin, righteousness, and judgment. Personal conviction is unnecessary when the Bible gives specific commands, instructions, and mitzvah's. You don't have to be convicted to pray for Israel, God's word is specific:

Psalms 122:6. Pray for shalom in Yerushalayim; may those who love you prosper.

Those who call upon the God of Israel are given specific instructions regarding Jerusalem, not only to pray but:

Isaiah 62:6-7. I have posted watchmen on your walls, Yerushalayim; they will never fall silent, neither by day nor by night. You who call on ADONAI, give yourselves no rest; ⁷ and give him no rest till he restores Yerushalayim and makes it a praise on earth.

"You who call on ADONAI" means every believer. When God's word gives a specific area of command, instruction, or teaching, we obey. Anything else is disobedience, and the disobedience to the known will of God is sin! If you are unmarried, you don't need conviction to know you should not live together unmarried or engage in sex or other such behaviors outside of marriage. This is where the heart, emotions, and conscience intertwine. Your heart will override your actions and behaviors that your conviction knows is sin.

We see that God desires our hearts be pure, that the hearts desires can be fulfilled, that God loves a broken, chastened heart, and that a broken heart can kill us! The sages teach that the heart is the seat of understanding in a person. The heart is where we humans do their deepest thinking. Our sayings of "I know in my heart," "I have a willing heart," or "I have a troubled heart," show that the heart is truly a vital, living part of every individual. Scripture mentions the heart almost 1,000 times. In essence, this is what it says: the heart is that spiritual part of us where our emotions and desires dwell. God has emotions and desires, He, too, can be said to have a "heart." We have a heart because God does.

Our passion, our desires are carried in our heart which is often at odds with our mind and logical thinking. Our heart can also be a source of negative thoughts that lead to behavior such as adultery, hatred, lust, vindictiveness, mischief, pride, and rebellion. The heart is the organ that is said to have the ability to reason, question, meditate, motivate, and think. Logical Thinking is often overcome by our heart. Passion can and will at times overcome what we know to be the right answer. We attempt as humans to retain secrets in our hearts, things that we think no one knows about, but God always does!

One of the enemies strongholds in our lives are the arguments, theories, and reasoning of the heart; pride, carnality, and deception. All rebellious thoughts and imaginations, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, must be brought down into submission through obedience. By submitting yourself in obedience to the Lord and His Word; you overthrow and destroy the strongholds that once oppressed your mind and darkened your heart with great conviction.

A conviction is a strong belief that so governs your decisions that you are willing to die for it. History is full of leaders who changed the world because of their convictions. The Scripture tells how Joseph's convictions enabled him to say no to sexual pleasure, how Daniel and his associates deep, strong convictions led

them to civil disobedience by not bowing to the statue of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. I love their replay to Nebuchadnezzar in

Daniel 3:16-18. Shadrakh, Meishakh and 'Aved-N'go answered the king, "Your question doesn't require an answer from us. ¹⁷ Your majesty, if our God, whom we serve, is able to save us, he will save us from the blazing hot furnace and from your power. ¹⁸ But even if he doesn't, we want you to know, your majesty, that we will neither serve your gods nor worship the gold statue which you have set up."

That answer came from deep, strong biblical conviction! Then knew not to bow! Personal convictions are based upon scriptural truth and applied to an individual believer's life. Personal convictions provide boundaries for an individual to live a godly, bible centered life. Ethics result from this scriptural and spiritual truth, revealing our true character and integrity, especially when we are under pressure. Someone once said that humans are like tea- Our true colors show up when we get into hot water. Many people never develop convictions because they make them appear narrow and intolerant by others! That's a people pleaser. Convictions are stronger than ideas or feelings. In fact, we might list it this way:

- 1. Idea: A thought, plan, or suggestion about what to do. A thought or concept which is usually attractive because it is new, different, or because it's yours.**
- 2. Opinion. An idea you feel emotionally tied to, but which might change as your emotions change. Opinions are often not based upon the truth or facts....**
- 3. Belief: Is a state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing. A strong inclination not only tied to emotions but based upon thoughtful reflection. Belief can be misplaced or incorrect. Just because you believe something doesn't make it true or factual.**
- 4. Commitment: The state or quality of being dedicated to a cause or activity. Commitment is a decision, a choice to embrace a belief or principle based on your emotions, mind and will. Commitment isn't based on emotions. Commitment is a character quality. Hebrew 10:25 tells us to "not neglecting our own congregational meetings, as some have made a practice of doing, but, rather, encouraging each other". Conviction will cause us to not miss a Shabbat. Emotions continually sway back and forth, up and down all the time while commitment has to be rock solid, unmovable, unalterable. Ken Blanchard s in His book "The Minute Manager" says:**

"There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you are committed to something, you accept no excuses"

God doesn't equip those who are interested, He equips those who are committed.

5. Conviction: In the biblical context, conviction is a profound awareness of one's moral, ethical, and kingdom responsibilities and the need for alignment with God's will. A strong belief that so governs your decisions that you are willing to die for it.

No convictions result in zero absolutes and leads to immorality, lawlessness, evil, and sin. No convictions are an excuse to sin by rejecting accountability. The author of James give an understanding of conviction in:

James 1:21-25. So rid yourselves of all vulgarity and obvious evil, and receive meekly the Word implanted in you that can save your lives. ²² Don't deceive yourselves by only hearing what the Word says, but do it! ²³ For whoever hears the Word but doesn't do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, ²⁴ who looks at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But if a person looks closely into the perfect Torah, which gives freedom, and continues, becoming not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work it requires, then he will be blessed in what he does.

The author is discussing a righteous lifestyle! To walk in a word centered lifestyle void of the vulgarities of sin! Remember, when this was written there was no New Testament so todays arguments based upon supersessionism, the Law, Old Testament being done away with, the holidays celebrated by todays body of believers haven't been invented yet. The New Testament is 350 years in the future. James chapter two then goes into the sin of showing partiality! The Good News is for both the rich and the poor, for Jew and Gentile alike! To do otherwise is a sin

James 2:9. But if you show favoritism, your actions constitute sin, since you are convicted (**elegcho {el-eng'-kho}: confute, judged, admonish, convince, rebuke, reprove, found guilty**) under the Torah as transgressors.

Showing partiality is sinning, a violation of Torah so by that same word you are convicted, guilty of sin. One who is convicted is guilty of sin or error. Conviction describes the work of our conscience regarding decisions between right and wrong in areas of our lives not specifically detailed in scripture. A conviction is a convinced conscience. Two examples that come to mind are Tobacco use and gambling. These two terms are not contained or outlined in scripture. Are either sinful or allowed? Well, it depends upon the person.

I'm not saying what is or isn't ok here or condoning any of these activities, both can be extremely dangerous.

Someone who would enjoy a fine cigar several times a year but is not addicted to smoking 2 packs a day I personally don't think is a problem. If you're addicted or have been addicted to smoking, you must stop and never touch tobacco products again! If you buy a lottery ticket 3-5 times a year for a dollar or two you don't have a problem, but if you're spending the grocery money every week gambling and are 50K in debt, it's an issue, its sin. The scripture that applies to this area is:

I Corinthians 6:12. You say, "For me, everything is permitted"? Maybe, but not everything is helpful. "For me, everything is permitted"? Maybe, but as far as I am concerned, I am not going to let anything gain control over me.

Whatever has control over you has imprisoned you, enslaved you! Love of money, drugs, alcohol, smoking, any idolatry etc. Pornography isn't in this category as it is the same as an affair (sin) according to Yeshua who said if you've lusted in your heart, you've already committed an affair. If you can't stop it for 21 days you have an addiction even if it isn't contained in scripture by name. To realize this downfall would be a conviction that you are guilty. This can be related to Halloween, Christmas etc. For the overwhelming majority that participate in these events it's an addiction, it's idolatry because one can't give it up or release it:

Matthew 15:8-9. 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me. ⁹ Their worship of me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines."

Deep conviction is essential for the strengthening of one's trust and faith. When believers are deeply convicted about Adonai, Yeshua, The Ruach HaKodesh, and their Kingdom beliefs they cannot be moved, they are more likely to withstand trials, challenges, and temptations. As stated in:

I Corinthians 15:58. So, my dear brothers, stand firm and immovable, always doing the Lord's work as vigorously as you can, knowing that united with the Lord your efforts are not in vain.

Living Out Conviction in Everyday Life impacts how we engage with the world. It motivates us to act justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with God:

Micah 6:8. Human being, you have already been told what is good, what ADONAI demands of you - no more than to act justly, love grace and walk in purity with your God.

The conviction to live out our trust and faith biblically challenges us to make choices that reflect our convictions and beliefs, serving as a testimony to others of the transformative power of God.

Biblical conviction encompasses a deep assurance and commitment to faith that impacts both personal belief and communal identity. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, conviction leads individuals to recognize their sins, embrace repentance, and live faithfully according to God's will. As believers cultivate their convictions, they not only strengthen their relationship with God but also become vessels of His love and truth in the world.

It's sobering how often the first reaction of someone trapped in sin is not conviction and repentance, rather its destruction. Instead of turning back to Adonai, many choose to attack others, shift blame, and tear down reputations. Why? Because truth exposes darkness, and pride hates exposure (remember Gideon and his father's Asherah pole). Conviction is meant to lead us to teshuvah, not hostility. But when the heart refuses to humble itself, it looks for scapegoats instead of repentance and mercy.

Yeshua never destroyed sinners. He confronted sin with truth, offered grace, and called people to conviction and transformation. That is the pattern we are called to follow, even when we are misunderstood, criticized, or attacked for standing upon truth.

Leaders and believers must stay rooted in truth. Don't compromise holiness to gain approval. Don't trade truth for peace that isn't real peace. Light will always be resisted by darkness — but the light always wins.

John 3:21. But everyone who does what is true comes to the light, so that all may see that his actions are accomplished through God."

Often times people want leaders to justify their sin with the Word of God vice conviction. The Word of God was never given to excuse sin, it was given to expose it, confront it, and lead us to conviction and repentance. A true, biblical shepherd does not soften truth to protect feelings. A true biblical leader does not bend Scripture to preserve popularity.

Hebrews 4:12. See, the Word of God is alive! It is at work and is sharper than any double-edged sword - it cuts right through to where soul meets spirit and joints meet marrow, and it is quick to judge the inner reflections and attitudes of the heart.

When leaders compromise, people stumble. When leaders stand firm, people are called higher. We do not judge Scripture in light of our ideas, emotions, beliefs, or actions. We judge our ideas, emotions, beliefs, and actions in light of Scripture which will bring conviction. Faithfulness is not always applauded, but it is always rewarded. Understanding and embracing conviction is crucial for any believer

seeking to align their life with biblical principles to live out their faith with deep conviction and trust. Conviction prevents compromise and apostasy!