



FAITH  
MADE  
SIMPLE

## Episode 214 - Conviction

*What is the difference between a belief and a conviction?*

*Copyright Faith Made Simple 2025*

### **Jerry Green:**

Welcome, friends — to this special podcast as we kick off the ninth season of Faith Made Simple with our pastor-teacher, Todd Smith. I'm Jerry Greene, your host. If you've been a faithful listener, you know Pastor Todd has a passion for explaining God's Word.

Understanding and obeying God's Word is central to the Christian life. James 1:25 assures us that God blesses his children when we're faithful and obedient. So let's listen now as Todd shares his thoughts for today.

### **Todd Smith:**

Welcome to week two of the new year. I pray your year is off to a great start. During January we're walking through character traits, rooted in Scripture, that I believe will strengthen our lives if we embrace them. Last week we talked about courage; today I want to talk about conviction.

Conviction is not a feeling. It's an immovable, bedrock certainty planted in the soul by the Holy Spirit through Scripture. It is the non-negotiable certainty that God's Word is authoritative and sufficient for life and doctrine. Without conviction Christianity drifts into mere preference; with conviction it becomes an all-in, life-and-death allegiance to Jesus. Look at the apostle Paul. Acts 20:24 captures his heart: "I do not consider my life of any value... if only I may finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord." Paul considered his life expendable; the gospel was not. That's conviction — faith that anchors you when chains, shipwrecks, and execution loom.

True biblical conviction has clear birthmarks:

It's rooted exclusively in Scripture — not in shifting feelings or culture. If it contradicts God's Word, it's counterfeit.

It's costly. Following Jesus will divide families and demand cross-bearing; conviction often costs everything (ask the martyrs).

It's courageous. Conviction refuses passivity; it confronts sin, corrects error, and holds truth steady when culture drifts.

Examine yourself: do you waver because culture tugs at your sleeve? Do you soften Scripture's teaching on issues like sexuality, gender, or sanctification to avoid conflict? Do

you fear man more than God? Weak convictions dishonor Christ and deceive the watching world. We need people who will stand like Luther — “Here I stand; I can do no other.” That was not arrogance; it was obedience. Conviction is not harshness; it is love that refuses to let people perish comfortably.

Hold Scripture tightly. Let conviction order your thoughts, words, and deeds until the day you see Christ face to face. On that day no one will regret having clung too tightly to God’s truth; many will regret how loosely they held it.

**Jerry Green:**

Todd, conviction is a tough subject because convictions that oppose culture bring real challenges. Practically, what’s the difference between a mere belief and a conviction?

**Todd Smith:**

Great question. A belief is something you hold — it might be important, even passionate, but it doesn’t necessarily hold you. A conviction holds you. You can have lots of beliefs (I prefer blue, for example), but you won’t die for them. A conviction is something that, when challenged, makes you a brick wall. Beliefs can be preferences or opinions; convictions are few, deep, and immovable. They’re the hills you’ll die on, because they’re grounded in Scripture and formed by the Spirit.

**Jerry Green:**

James warns against double-mindedness — convictions keep us steady rather than tossed by every wind. And Christian convictions should always be Scripture-based, right?

**Todd Smith:**

Absolutely. The authority for a conviction is God’s Word. When you can say, “I can die on this hill because God said so,” you’ve moved from mere opinion to biblical conviction.

**Jerry Green:**

Thanks, Todd. Friends, that brings us to the close of this episode of season nine. Lord willing, we’ll be back next week with another podcast. If you’re local, visit us at Crossroads Community Church in Valencia, California, where God’s Word is taught faithfully, verse by verse. For more information about the podcast or the church, visit [FaithMadeSimple.net](http://FaithMadeSimple.net). On behalf of Todd and the Faith Made Simple team, we look forward to our next visit. Until then, remain faithful and be a doer of God’s Word.