

Don't just inherit your convictions.

Learn what you believe, why you believe it, and how truth should shape the way you live.

60 minutes / Truth + Wisdom / Romans 12:1-2

Bring a printed Bible (NKJV), paper, and pens. Use your Bible for full Scripture readings.

LEADER PREP • 5 MINUTES

Move beyond "because church says so."

Many students grow up knowing what they are supposed to do without understanding why.

That may work while trusted adults are making most of their decisions, but borrowed rules are often fragile when students encounter new pressure, new ideas, or greater independence.

We want something deeper: **convictions formed by Scripture, shaped by wisdom, and lived through obedience to God.**

THE WIN

Do not make tonight a list of everything Christians should or should not do. Teach students how to think biblically before you ask them to make difficult decisions.

TONIGHT'S FLOW

Teach them how to think, not only what to avoid.

Students need a process for evaluating real decisions when a parent, pastor, or leader is not standing beside them.

15 MIN / Table Ask students what kinds of decisions people their age feel the most pressure around: relationships, media, language, parties, sexuality, substances, friendships, social media, honesty, or something else.

15 MIN / Word Read Romans 12:1-2 and use the teaching points below to explain how convictions are formed.

20 MIN / Talk Use the discussion questions and allow students to wrestle with the difference between commands, wisdom, conscience, and personal preference.

10 MIN / Practice + Pray Choose one realistic decision and work through the four-part conviction framework together.

THE BIG IDEA

A conviction is truth you understand deeply enough to live by.

Biblical convictions are not built only on feelings, culture, pressure, or personal preference. They grow as God's Word renews our minds and teaches us what pleases Him.

SCRIPTURE

A renewed mind.

ROMANS 12:1-2

Paul tells believers not to be "**conformed to this world**" but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.

That means following Jesus involves more than behaving differently. God wants to transform the way we think.

As our minds are renewed by truth, we become increasingly able to "**prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**"

Convictions grow when Scripture changes the way we evaluate decisions.

TEACHING GUIDE • 15 MINUTES

Four truths to establish.

The goal is not independence from spiritual authority. The goal is maturity under the authority of Scripture.

01 Scripture has authority over us.

Christians do not begin with "What feels right to me?" We begin with God's Word. When Scripture clearly commands or forbids something, obedience is not merely a matter of preference.

02 Not every decision has a verse with your exact situation in it.

Scripture gives commands, principles, wisdom, and a picture of God's character. Sometimes maturity means applying biblical truth to situations the Bible does not name directly.

03 Freedom is not permission to ignore holiness.

The Christian question is not simply, "Can I get away with this?" We ask whether something honors Christ, strengthens our spiritual life, protects others, and reflects God's holy character.

04 Convictions should become stronger as you mature.

A young believer may begin by obeying trusted adults. That is not wrong. But spiritual maturity means increasingly understanding Scripture for yourself and choosing obedience because you want your life to please God.

A CONVICTION FRAMEWORK

Ask four questions before you decide.

01 · SCRIPTURE

What does God's Word say?

Is there a clear biblical command, prohibition, principle, example, or warning that speaks to this decision?

02 · HOLINESS

Does this move me toward Christ?

Will this strengthen or weaken my pursuit of holiness, purity, truth, love, self-control, and obedience?

03 · WISDOM

Where does this lead?

What are the likely consequences? What patterns could this create? What would wise believers who know me say?

04 · WITNESS

Does this reflect Jesus well?

How could this affect another person, my testimony, my relationships, or someone else's spiritual life?

HOLINESS

The goal is not rule keeping. The goal is a life that belongs to God.

Holiness is not about trying to earn salvation. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ.

But the grace that saves us also calls us into a transformed life.

The Church of God confesses **holiness to be God's standard of living for His people**. That means our choices matter because our lives belong to Him.

Convictions are one way holiness moves from something we talk about into decisions we actually make.

TALK

Let them wrestle with real decisions.

01 What's the difference between a rule someone gives you and a conviction you personally understand?

02 Why can "everyone else is doing it" be a dangerous way to make decisions?

03 What should you do when the Bible does not directly mention the exact decision you're facing?

04 Why is "Is this technically allowed?" sometimes the wrong question for a Christian?

05 Where do you feel the most pressure right now to compromise what you know is right?

OPTIONAL / KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- When have you needed courage to do something you knew was right?
- How can you tell the difference between biblical teaching and someone's personal preference?
- What could you do before a difficult situation so you are better prepared for it?
- How could you explain a conviction with both clarity and kindness?

Choose what helps your group. You do not need to ask every question.

PRACTICE + PRAY

STUDENT PRACTICE**Work the framework.**

Choose one realistic situation for your students. Example: "Everyone in your friend group is watching or sharing something you know is questionable."

Work through: Scripture · Holiness · Wisdom · Witness.

Do not immediately give them your conclusion. Teach them how to arrive at one biblically.

PERSONAL RESPONSE**Name one conviction.**

Ask students to write: "One area where I want to know what I believe before the pressure comes is..."

Encourage them to identify Scripture, ask a trusted spiritual leader, and begin developing a biblical conviction before they are standing in the moment of decision.

LEADER COACHING

Notice this.

- Which students know rules but cannot explain biblical reasons behind them?
- Who tends to make decisions primarily from peer approval?
- Which topics immediately expose confusion or competing beliefs?
- Are you distinguishing clearly between explicit biblical teaching and your personal preference?
- Are students learning that holiness is rooted in belonging to God, not earning His love?
- Does anyone need a private conversation about a current situation they are facing?

BEFORE WEEK NINE

Put conviction into action.

- 01** Encourage students to write down one area where they want a stronger biblical conviction.
- 02** Help them find two or three relevant Scriptures rather than relying on isolated proof texts.
- 03** Encourage them to talk with a parent, pastor, or trusted spiritual leader about that area.
- 04** Midweek, ask: "Did you face a decision this week where conviction mattered?"
- 05** Begin preparing students for the next movement: convictions should eventually produce action, service, and responsibility.

PARENT TABLE TALK

Explain the why.

Rules without relationship or explanation can become convictions students abandon the moment they leave home.

ASK Is there a family or church expectation you've never really understood?

SHARE Tell your student about one biblical conviction you had to develop personally as you matured.

PRACTICE Choose one real decision and work through: Scripture · Holiness · Wisdom · Witness.

PRAY "God, renew our minds through Your Word. Give us wisdom and courage to live in a way that pleases You."

NEXT

Week 09 - You Were Made to Serve.

Students are learning what they believe and how those beliefs shape their choices. Next, we move outward: following Jesus means using what God has given us for the good of His Church and other people.