

## Episode 011

# Building Deeper Convictions

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## Introduction

The convictions of leaders are crucial for their ability to lead inspiringly and also for their long-term success. I had touched on various aspects of these in previous podcasts. In the 2-part The Leaders Convictions podcasts, I elaborated about Types of Convictions and about the Dangers of Unbalanced Convictions.

Today I will unpack how 6 critical ingredients help us build deeper biblical convictions.

## 1. Value Deeper Convictions

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Leaders must value convictions. Deeper convictions. Unshakeable convictions.

Every conviction that we build deeply into our lives are like pitons that mountain climbers used to anchor into the rock face. The deeper it is hammered into the rock, the stronger it will be against being pulled out. The more pitons that the climbers put into the rock face, the series of anchors will make it all much stronger. Even if one piton fails, the rest will hold the climber up. In the same way, the more convictions we anchor into our lives the greater the resistance against failure.

The stronger our convictions, the greater the challenges we can face, the greater our passion, the greater our impact upon others. Hence, leaders must make it one of our key discipline and passion – building deeper convictions in our lives.



## 2 Pet 1:12 (NIV)

So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.

I realised that I needed to build my convictions deeply and quickly. Why? So that I can be used of God fully. Lack of convictions will slow me down. So when something comes to me, like through God's Word or through the Holy Spirit – I grasp it and make sure to develop my convictions.

It is crucial that you develop strong convictions over a wide area. Our convictions should not only be limited to biblical and spiritual matters in the areas of our interest alone. It must spread wide. Into as many spiritual areas as possible. Into education, business, health, politics, economics, sports, etc. Why? Because God wants us to spread the influence of the Kingdom into this world.

## 2. God's Word

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God's Word is the fundamental ingredient for godly and biblical convictions. It is important to base our convictions upon the Word of God. We must know the Word of God and know it well. Because if we misinterpret or misunderstand God's Word – it could lead to misplaced convictions. If we are ignorant about some aspects of God's Word it could mean we lack some aspect in building godly convictions.

However, there are different categories of biblical truth.

- Direct or explicit Biblical truth. "God is love"
- Derived or implicit biblical truth – in between the explicit truths. "God is one yet three"
- Extrapolated biblical truth. "God is outside of time and created time".
- Biblical principles. Eg: "Do not get drunk on wine" vs "Avoid drunkenness" vs "Do not lose sound-mindedness or Spirit-mindedness."



When we rely only on explicit biblical truth, our convictions are limited to specific biblical statements only. When we understand derived biblical truth we broaden our range of potential convictions. When we broaden with biblical principles, we further broaden our conviction areas.

For example, I believe Christ-followers can participate in war. I do not believe that God's intention is that we be pacifists who avoid war at all cost. Why? Because we see the principle of fighting in wars in the OT. God is a god of war. God starts wars and wins wars. There is war in the heavenlies which God and His angels wage against the Devil. God wars against evil, unrighteousness, etc. So war in itself is not bad, nor is it good. It is neutral. War is a means to an end. It is why we fight wars and how we fight wars that make it bad or evil. When the governments of this world engage in war, it is often corrupted, messy, etc. Which is why it becomes difficult to work out whether we should be involved in any human wars.

My point is that if we are to build our convictions broadly, we must understand God's Word so well that we can extract the right principles and properly apply it across many complex issues. Then we can begin to build godly and biblical convictions even in those areas.

### 3. Faith

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Faith comes into the whole equation because we must believe in God's Word, that it is fully true. Many believe intellectually, but fewer believe in their hearts. Too often we are unbelieving believers. Because we fail to believe fully what the Bible declares. When we lack faith, we lack conviction. When the Bible says lay hand on the sick and they will be healed, how many of us think in our hearts, "Well, perhaps."



We must grow in our faith level so that our convictions can grow too. We can grow in our faith in respond to God when He speaks to us. Gideon's faith grew as he interacted with God. Until it was large enough to tackle the Midianites.

Leaders need to have faith to build convictions based on God's Word. That is foundational. Then building on top of that should be faith to believe God's specific word to us. My becoming a pastor, being an HIM elder and President, planting this church and planting churches out of this church, building Unidus Community Centre, etc are all part of this growing faith on my part.

## 4. Knowing God

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Part of building our convictions rely upon our relationship with God. Because fundamentally we are having to trust God. The question is how much do we trust God? Only to the degree that we know God well enough to trust Him in our hearts.

A related question is how well do we understand Him? Do we understand how God does things, His heart, what He is actually asking for, etc?

It is important to understand what He is asking of us clearly. People often get disappointed with God because they fail to understand what He is requiring of us. This creates misunderstandings and they wonder why God did not help or respond to them in a way they expected.

The prophet Agabus gave a prophetic word to Paul but was it to dissuade or to prepare? Paul knew what it was.



**Acts 21:11 - 13 (NIV)**

11 Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" 12 When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Our convictions will be strengthened as we know our God better.

## 5. Framework of Insight

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Another key ingredient is building a framework of insight into the things of God. A framework like our bone structure which is like a honeycomb structure. Light weight but strong. God's Word provides us the nodes in this framework. The more of God's Word that we build convictions upon – the more nodes we establish. But the other key is to link those nodes together into a honeycomb framework. The more linkages, the stronger it becomes.

We build those linkages with insight. Insight links God's truth together. What may seem to be separate nuggets of truth begins to join together because you see the dotted lines in-between. The implications become clearer, the effects of God's commands and instructions become clearer, the reasons behind God's commands become more tangible. The reasons why we need to act becomes compelling.

For example, same sex marriage. More than just God's command against the act of homosexuality. It is against distorting God's design for gender, it is against distorting God's design for marriage and family. Which ultimately impacts upon God's design for church and society.



Gender sexual confusion is not an individualistic sexual preference alone. It always impacts others as well. When more gender confusion prevails, it spread like a disease. When we allow same sex marriage, we are affirming it, giving it legitimacy rather than addressing it. Worse, the impact upon children who have no choice – it corrupts their sexuality. The Devil is working hard in all this because it corrupts society at its very foundations.

We have to train ourselves to read, study, think deeply and broadly about issues of all kinds. So that we can develop strong convictions in this world.

## 6. Courage

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Without courage, we will not be able to act upon our convictions. Without courage, we will struggle to deepen our convictions because fear will hold us back. We must overcome fear and unbelief in our hearts.

### 2 Tim 1:7 (NIV)

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

It takes courage to step out and act. It takes courage to rise up against the tide and uphold God's standard. It takes courage to pay the price, to make the sacrifices. Lai Ling and I have had to have the courage to push forward in so many areas – at times putting at risk what we hold dear. For we understand that we cannot advance anything significantly if we lack courage.

As leaders, you need to be courageous. Rise up. As leaders, you need to challenge and inspire your people to be courageous.



## Conclusion

God is looking for a people of conviction who can rise up and lead His people in His ways. We need to determine in our hearts to be a people of conviction. As deeply, as quickly and as broadly as possible, by the grace of God. Yet we need to make sure our convictions are based correctly upon God's Word. Incorrect convictions of leadership are not helpful. Godly convictions will align our leadership with God.

We also need to understand the difference between convictions that God's people should have generally and personal convictions that we need to have.

For example, my conviction is that we should put our kids through the public school system because I believe that will put them into better stead in the future to understand what the world is like. I did not want to insulate them in a Christian school. Also, because we realised that we did not want to strain our financial situation since our income is quite limited. It is my conviction for my family but which I should not impose on others. But I can share about it to help people consider the principles behind which we have made our decision. Perhaps some might also choose the same route. I also realise that the times are changing with the Left agenda growing in public schools.

A wise leader learns to discern the difference.



## Discussion Questions

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These questions could be done personally or as part of a group discussion.

1. How important is it to you to develop convictions, especially in relation to God's Word?
2. How important is it to you to develop convictions, especially in relation to God's Word?
3. How has knowing God more helped you develop deeper convictions? Why?

## Actionable Steps

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Following questions are to prompt us on suitable actions. Importantly, come up with steps you will take to make progress. Give them datelines and priority.

1. What specific steps can you take to understand biblical truths in a clearer way, so that you can broaden your basis to develop biblical convictions?
2. Can you work out some simple steps that will help you develop frameworks of insights? So as to strengthen specific convictions?
3. What are some key steps you can take to increase your faith based on God's Word?





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