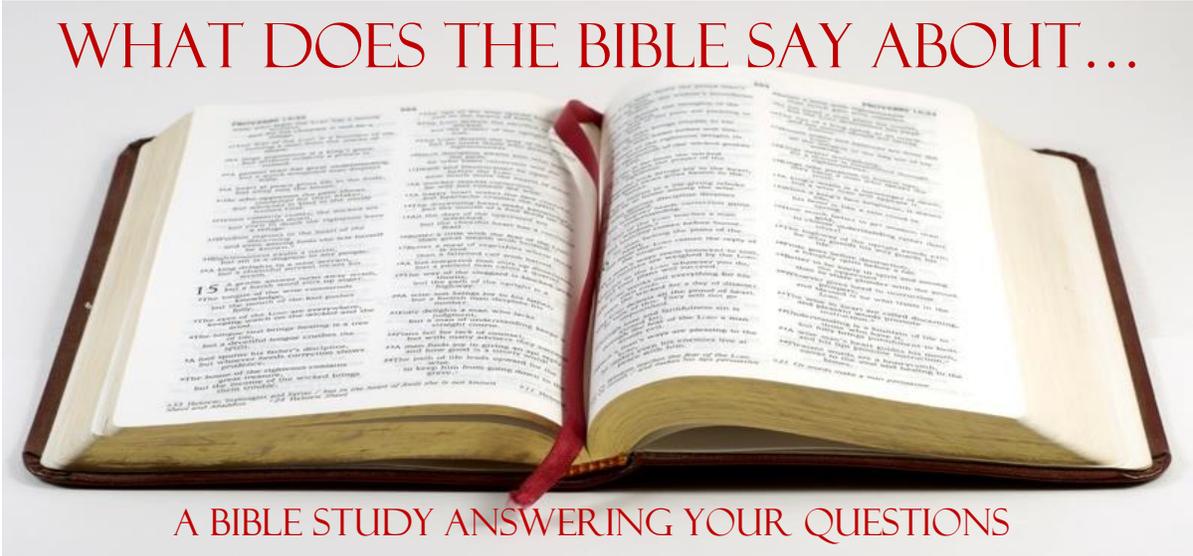


WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT...



A BIBLE STUDY ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

Lesson 11

What does the Bible say about personal convictions?

The word "conviction" is not in the Bible.

When people say: I don't have a conviction, or I do have a conviction about something, what does that mean?

Biblical Truths vs. Personal Convictions:

First: What is a "personal conviction"? A **strong persuasion or belief**.

1. So, if they have a conviction, they believe something strongly.
2. Or, if they don't accept or believe something strongly they "don't have a conviction".
3. Often this relates to Biblical teaching.

Are there areas where it's acceptable for a person to have 'personal convictions'?

Are there areas where 'Biblical Truths' are subject to, or, allowed to be rejected because a person 'doesn't have the conviction'? _____

A dramatic difference exists between Biblical Truths and personal convictions. Too often we Christians confuse the two.

We live and die for Biblical Truth.

Personal convictions are not nearly as foundational to living out the Christian life as Biblical Truths are.

Convictions have more to do with our consciences.

1. Often to feel better we might say, "I don't have that conviction..."
2. This has been an issue in the church since the days of the apostles.

Christians have been divided over what Paul referred to as "disputable issues" ever since the first century.

Most disagreements from the first century down to the present day were not over Biblical issues.

The disagreements were over personal convictions regarding personal consciences.

The Roman Christians were having great difficulty in deciding just which activities were acceptable and which were not. They were arguing, among other things, about whether or not it was alright for Christians to eat meat which had previously been offered to idols and then sold at a discount in the market places surrounding the pagan temples.

Romans 14:1-3 ¹ Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations. ² For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. ³ Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

Romans 14:5-6 ⁵ One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. ⁶ He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

Romans 14:12-13 ¹² So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³ Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

Romans 14:14-15 ¹⁴ I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. ¹⁵ But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

Romans 14:21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

How do you decide if an issue is disputable or not?

Paul's example of "meats" is a perfect example because the debate itself in scripture. Some people were convicted not to eat meat sacrificed to idols, others were not.

"Disputable matters" are areas where the Bible doesn't expressly give direction.

Two disputable matters—among many others—were rampant in the church in Rome:

1. Eating meat offered to idols
2. Celebrating pagan holidays

We are safe to limit disputable areas to things that are disputed in the Bible itself and things that are not in the Bible at all.

However, there are principles in the Bible that can and must be applied to modern man.

1. The Bible is against drunkenness: Gal. 3:19-21, Isa. 28:7, Prov. 20:1
2. We apply the topic of drunkenness to drug use as well.
3. Holiness: Heb. 12:14, 1 Pet. 1:16, Deut. 7:6

Somewhat "disputable" issues. Although the Bible is clear on most of these issues, there are still disagreements.

1. Same sex marriage and homosexuality.

2. Women in ministry.
3. Abortion.
4. Eternal security/once saved, always saved.
5. Facial hair on men.
6. Dancing, movies, social media, etc...

Caution: Many times people try to excuse away their noncompliance with Biblical teaching as “I don’t have a conviction against it”.

The danger arises when someone decides for themselves that it’s OK to do something that goes against the Word of God. This is a form of idolatry and certainly disobedience.

Since the Bible says we must repent, is it disputable? _____

Since the Bible says we must be baptized in Jesus Name to be saved, should we do it or is it disputable? _____

Since the Bible says we must have the Holy Ghost, is it disputable? _____

Since the Bible says fornication, adultery, lying, and stealing are wrong, is it disputable?

Let’s take stealing for a moment: Is shoplifting wrong? _____. Is cheating on your taxes wrong? _____.

Is it wrong to eat one of the bunch of bananas you are buying at the grocery store without paying for it? _____.

Let’s take fornication: Is it wrong to have a sexual relationship before marriage?
_____.

Is it also wrong to have a sexual relationship before marriage if both parties have had sex before, through marriage and divorce or living together, etc.? _____.

Is lying wrong? _____

How about if someone asks you if that dress makes them look fat??? _____

Too often people want to form God in their “own” image. They want a god who will ignore or permit their issues.

Children Obey Your Parents:

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

What if a child or young person doesn’t have the same convictions as their parents?

Let’s go a little way back in the lesson: If the Bible is clear on an issue, conviction or not, it doesn’t matter. Obedience is in order.

I teach, as long as you live in your parents’ home, you need to abide by their rules. Even if you are well beyond being a “child or youth”.

Ex. 20:12, Pr. 1:8, Pr. 30:17, Heb. 13:17, Deut. 5:16, Rom. 13:1-7

By the way, it’s wrong for children to play parents against each other.

Don’t abuse their love and patience in favor of your personal desires.

It comes down to this:

1. The idea of personal “convictions” is really a nonbiblical concept.
2. What everyone must decide is if they will obey the Word or not.
3. Disputable issues are limited to things that do not relate to a person’s salvation. In a sense, these are personal preferences and cannot be forced on anyone else.
4. It’s your responsibility to study or have an elder help you study topics that you may not be “convicted” about yet. Or better yet, that you may not be obeying yet.
5. Obedience. God will always, and in fact, bless you for obeying even if you may not be fully convinced yet. It’s not hypocritical, its honorable to obey.

To answer the question: **What does the Bible say about personal convictions?**

Answer: The idea of personal convictions is not Biblical. Either you obey or you don't. If you don't it will affect your salvation.

Debatable issues are already debated in the Word. If it's not debated in the Word then it's not debatable.