

By Russ Gressett

### Conviction

The conviction power of the Holy Spirit is special. It is overlooked or suppressed a lot of times in our day to day lives primarily because it is not all just about conviction of sin (although we suppress that many times as well). We need to really focus on conviction and recognize that the Holy Spirit is always working and utilizing conviction power.

A lot of what we see as failures are wrapped up in the revelation surrounding conviction power. We forget many times that it's not our job to convince someone to believe. That's what the Holy Spirit is fantastic at doing. The conviction power of God manifests in many different ways ... sometimes visible to the eye ... other times it's a total inside job, but both are designed to compel us toward pure heart decisions, pure heart actions and pure heart beliefs.

Have you recognized the conviction power of the Holy Spirit while you are ministering to others in daily life? Have you recognized it in your own life? We need to specifically add our faith to the Holy Spirit's conviction power ... I believe we will see changes immediately as we do.

Here is what Jesus said:

#### **John 16**

*7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

*12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

Jesus gave a great outline here of what the Holy Spirit would do when He came. It's not necessarily an all inclusive list, but it does touch on an important part of the Holy Spirit's job that we as believers need to have a strong and fully persuaded faith in ... His conviction power. The conviction power of the Holy Spirit is brimming full and overflowing with God's love. I remember when it hit me as a boy the first time. It compelled me to action. I had to do something. It still works that way in my life. It compels me to repent. It compels me to step out in faith. It compels me to stand strong in what I believe. It compels me to believe what is true about me. It compels me to change. It compels me to think the thoughts of God the Father when I have slipped into thinking in other ways. The conviction power actually heals and delivers and sets me free.

We need to be continuously aware of the Holy Spirit's conviction power as it works both in our lives and in the lives of those to whom we minister. It helps to focus our faith on His conviction power knowing that it will compel others to respond just as it does us. The Holy Spirit is well able to convince in any situation. He has many tools at His service to utilize in convicting ... and He doesn't always use the same ones. To think that His simple inner drawing of our hearts is not enough for someone to be convinced is naïve and displays a lack of understanding about conviction power. To think also that God would never use signs and wonders to gain someone's attention is also naïve. The Holy Spirit's approach to conviction certainly does not fit in a box. Just look at a sample of the record ... Paul was blinded, Mary Magdalene was delivered from seven demons, to Matthew, all He said was "follow me". They were all convicted and convinced.

Some are focused so heavily on seeing signs and wonders performed through them that the actual harvest produced from the signs and wonders is really just an afterthought. The focus is really on the signs and wonders ... not the convicted and changed hearts from the manifestation of signs and wonders. In such cases, the signs and wonders are placed in a position of leading the believer ... not following the believer. We can make those things an idol if we are not careful.

Others are so fearful of how the public "image" of seeing signs and wonders will cause them to be labeled that they do not even care to see God move miraculously even if that is the way the Holy Spirit chooses to bring conviction. So what's the answer? The answer is to focus on the Father and how He wants to work and accomplish His intention in a particular situation. That's how Jesus did it, right? The passage above clearly indicated that the Holy Spirit was not going to speak on His own authority, but whatever He heard. Again, it's not our job to make people believe ... we were sent the Helper for that.

I experienced the conviction power of the Holy Spirit in salvation, you did as well ... everyone who is born again experienced it. It moved us to action and to a decision point. The drawing of the Lord is a yes or no proposition. However, can you say that this drawing power ... this grace that saves ... would not have worked on you unless some sign or wonder was witnessed by you ... or unless hell's fire was threatened against you ... or unless deliverance was promised? Maybe you experienced some of those things when you were convicted, maybe you didn't. Maybe God's goodness was made real to you in one simple conversation with someone and you responded as you came to realize you needed a savior to fix your condition. The point is that the Holy Spirit is plainly charged with the role of conviction, and He knows what He is doing. Don't make assumptions as to how He has to do the convicting in any particular situation. Don't make an assumption as to what He has to display or not display to get the job done. He may use a sign or wonder or He may use a particular phrase of words that He drops in your heart, or it may be something that's never been heard of or recorded before.

Jesus' ministry witnessed great signs and wonders but also simple words of truth from the Father that compelled as well. But what was true of Jesus? He was not seeking the notoriety or the experience. He was not seeking the sighting of angels. He was not seeking to show others the proof of God's power working through Him so that He could be set apart or elevated. He was not seeking any of those things. He was seeking the will of the Giver of these things in each situation that He found Himself in. He was seeking His

family with a pure and whole heart.

God spoke to my heart one time some things relating to His conviction power. He was speaking to me about the kings in the earth today at the time, but it is just as applicable to anyone else. An excerpt of some of the statements is as follows:

*Son, the kings in your day are the captains of industry, heads of state, political influence, monetary policy influence, media influence and the like. The key to nations is through these kings ... one king at a time. Why? Because kings lead nations and people look to and follow kings. The key to kings is to offer their hearts My presence, My goodness, and My conviction power which is sent with the Holy Spirit. A change in their hearts comes by their hearing. That's what the Holy Spirit does. He brings a hearing and a sensing of Me and a realization of the need for a Savior (Jesus).*

*In all manner of situations, circumstances, rule and control, the heart can be touched, softened, convicted and changed. That's what happened with you ... that's what happens with everybody. At the top, at the bottom, or in the middle of any spectrum, this is true. My unhindered conviction power sent with the Holy Spirit is a stronger force than any and all devils put together. The earth knows no other power like it. It is the power that I send to bring understanding, revelation and life to those spiritually separated from Me. On the scale of My power, it's at the top. It literally has My full force of love in it ... but it's soft like a dove.*

Have we truly recognized all that flows through the conviction power of the Holy Spirit? Have we truly recognized the extent of liberation that is contained in this mandate given to the Holy Spirit? Have we focused our faith on it and given up our agendas to simply take on the agenda of the Holy Spirit who is charged with all convicting. Our specific faith in what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would in fact do when He came really does have an impact in every situation.

The Holy Spirit's convicting has the intention of moving someone along in relationship with the Father. Even the order of what Jesus laid out about the Holy Spirit's conviction mandate is important.

*"He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

The Holy Spirit first needs us to know that we have/had sin in our life and need/needed a Savior. Then, He needs us to know that we are righteous because He is righteous (He took our place ... we took His place). Then, He needs us to know that the enemy who battles against us has already been judged and declared a loser. Think of your own life and walk with God and how each of these revelations moves you along a path of relationship with the Father. Sin consciousness, then righteousness consciousness, then winner consciousness ... we are all somewhere along that path. Sometimes we get stuck on sin consciousness and fail to cooperate with the Holy Spirit when He is convicting us of

righteousness. The Holy Spirit is still in the business of convicting us about all three of these areas. His power to do so in all situations is not a “maybe” proposition. The passage says He will do it.

As Christians, it seems like we have a bigger problem with the last two than we do the first one. Think about it ...have we truly been convicted of righteousness? Have we truly been convicted that the ruler of this world has been judged a loser? Paul said “**I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus**” ... and he believed it. He was fully convicted of who lived in Him and what was true of him as a result (**Galatians 2:20**). We need to let the Holy Spirit fully convict and convince us of the same truth. Why? Because we will act like what we believe is true of ourselves. If we have a sin problem in our life, we need to allow the Holy Spirit to convict us of righteousness. Jesus is not on the cross anymore ... He is on the throne at the right hand of God the Father. When we truly believe we are righteous because He is righteous, we’ll act like what we believe is true and our sin problems will go away.

When we believe the ruler of this world has been judged a loser, we will make decisions in power and faith, not fear and intimidation and worry. We’ll believe he is truly powerless just as Jesus plainly did in the wilderness. We’ll truly believe God’s word when it says the angel will wrap a great chain around his neck and throw him in the lake of fire and that God himself will send fire from heaven and devour him. It’s finished already!

I encourage you today to take on a new focus toward the Holy Spirit’s conviction power when you are ministering to others and when He is ministering to you. Have faith in what is happening and listen for how He is doing the convicting. Have faith that the Holy Spirit is doing His job right here, right now and that He is very good at what He does. Let Him also do a complete work of conviction in your own life. Don’t stop at the conviction of sin. Allow Him ... ask Him ... to convict you of righteousness and of judgment as well because we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and the ruler of this world has been judged a loser already! Amen.

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