

Small Group Guide: Living with Conviction in 2026

Opening Prayer & Ice Breaker

Ice Breaker Question: What's one resolution you've made in the past that you actually kept? What made the difference?

Key Scripture References

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

1 Kings 17 (David and Goliath)

John 3:16

Main Themes

1. Vase vs. Face: Display or Authentic Living

Are we displaying Christ authentically, or presenting different faces to different people?

2. Conviction Over Compromise

The challenge of standing firm in faith rather than taking the path of least resistance.

3. Freedom Indeed

Understanding the difference between being free and being "free indeed" in Christ.

Discussion Questions

Opening Questions (10-15 minutes)

The sermon asked: "If our family, friends, and neighbors followed us, would they make it to heaven?" How does this question make you feel? What does it reveal about our responsibility as Christians?

Pastor Steve used the metaphor of floating toward danger on the Current River. Where in your life do you feel like you might be "floating" rather than being intentional about your direction?

Diving Deeper (20-25 minutes)

The Churchill Story: Winston Churchill was known for his refusal to compromise during England's darkest hour. What areas of your faith life require this kind of conviction? Where have you been tempted to compromise?

David and Goliath: David saw Goliath's challenge as defying God, not just Israel. When have you witnessed God's name or character being defied? How did you respond? How should we respond?

The sermon challenged us about being "water instead of concrete" - flowing to the path of least resistance. In what specific situations do you find yourself being "water" when you should be "concrete"?

Speaking Up: Pastor Steve mentioned that "America quit speaking up" on important issues. What prevents you personally from speaking up about your faith? Fear? Comfort? Uncertainty?

Personal Reflection (15-20 minutes)

The sermon asked if we're living to GET to heaven or living LIKE we're already in heaven. What's the difference? Which describes your current approach?

The Cheerful (Hilarious) Giver: Discuss the story of the widow's mite. What does it mean to give hilariously? This applies not just to money, but to our time, talents, and testimony. What would hilarious giving look like in your life?

Pastor Steve confessed his struggle with spending time on social media reels versus prayer. What consumes your time that could be redirected toward eternal purposes?

Prayer for Others: The challenge was issued to ask God daily who in the

church we should pray for. How can we practically implement this in our daily lives?

Key Takeaways

Conviction is a stronghold for good - while worldly strongholds oppose God's will, conviction anchors us to His truth

Compromise is progressive - small compromises lead to larger ones until faith becomes watered down

Freedom requires fighting - spiritual freedom isn't passive; it requires the armor of God and intentional stand-taking

Love is the identifier - people will know we're Christians by how we love one another, not by our programs or buildings

Surrender precedes power - like the widow giving her last mite, true freedom comes from complete surrender to God

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2):

PERSONAL CONVICTION:

Identify one area where you've been compromising your faith. Write it down and create a specific plan to stand firm this week.

Replace 15 minutes of social media/entertainment time with prayer for church members daily.

SPEAKING UP:

Ask God to give you one opportunity this week to share your faith or stand up for Christ. Commit to taking it when it comes.

Practice saying "I'm a follower of Jesus" in a conversation this week (not just "I'm a Christian").

HILARIOUS GIVING:

Evaluate your giving (time, money, talents) and ask God to show you where you're being "reluctant" rather than "hilarious."

Give something sacrificially this week - whether financially, through service, or in time spent with someone who needs encouragement.

LOVING THE CHURCH:

Reach out to three people from church this week with a text, call, or visit - not because they need something, but simply to encourage them.

Pray daily for specific church members by name (ask God to bring them to mind).

Group Accountability

Pair up with an accountability partner from the group:

Share which practical application you're committing to this week

Exchange contact information

Check in mid-week to encourage one another

Report back next week on what God did

Closing Reflection Questions

What is one specific way you want to demonstrate conviction this year rather than compromise?

Complete this sentence: "This year, I want to be known for

_____."

What would change in your life if you truly believed you were in a spiritual war and needed to "put on the full armor of God" daily?

Closing Prayer Focus

Pray together as a group:

For courage to stand firm in conviction without compromise
For authentic love for one another in the church
For boldness to speak up about Jesus
For hilarious, joyful generosity in all areas of life
For specific needs and struggles shared during discussion
That people following your life would be led to Jesus
For Next Week

Personal Preparation:

Read through the book of Acts chapters 1-4
Journal about one time this week when you chose conviction over compromise
Come prepared to share how your practical application went

Memory Verse: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." - 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Leader Notes

Allow time for honest sharing; this sermon challenges comfort zones
Be prepared to share your own struggles with compromise and conviction
Emphasize grace alongside the call to conviction - we're not earning salvation
If discussion becomes political, redirect to personal spiritual application
Celebrate any victories or examples of conviction from group members
Consider having tissues available - this topic may bring up emotional responses