

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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COMMITMENT

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Peter said that in the suffering of Christ He did not revile or threaten His tormentors *“but committed himself to him that judgeth rightteously”* (1 Pet. 2:23). Here the word *“committed”* means to entrust to one’s charge, to turn over to the object of one’s trust. Paul told Timothy to *“commit to faithful men”* the word which he had been taught (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul said that God had *“committed to my trust”* the glorious gospel (1 Tim. 1:11). Paul had *“committed unto him against that day”* and urged Timothy to keep by the Holy Spirit *“that good thing which was committed unto thee”* (2 Tim. 1:12, 14). Here the idea involves a putting with, a deposit, a pledge of fidelity.

That God expects commitment on the part of His children cannot be denied. We have committed all to our God and with good reason. He always keeps His promises. Our commitment is to Jesus Christ as well. *“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”* (Mt. 16:24). We are committed to the word of God. To the Ephesian elders Paul said, *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32).

TOTAL COMMITMENT. This commitment must be total, complete with nothing held back. Partial obedience to the Lord and what He requires is not obedience at all. When Saul greeted Samuel with the news that *“I have obeyed the commandment of the Lord,”* Samuel asked, *“What meaneth then the lowing of the oxen and the bleating of the sheep in my ears?”* (1 Sam. 15:12-14). Indeed, does the Lord have as great delight in sacrifice as in obeying his voice? Paul warned of a perverted gospel in Galatians 1:6-9. Oh, it had elements of truth in it, but it was not total truth. Jesus clinched the matter when He drew the conclusion from His two illustrations of the importance of counting the cost when He said, *“Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple”* (Lk. 14:33). Some of your heart is not enough. He will be Lord of all of it, or else of none of it.

PERSISTENT. This commitment must remain constant under every circumstance. Under the strongest temptation we must remain committed. Peter said, *“abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul”* (1 Pet. 2:11). Even in the face of peers who would entice us into error we have to remember that *“evil companions corrupt good morals”* (1 Cor. 15:33). We did enough succumbing to the desires of the flesh before we obeyed the gospel and even if former friends

“think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you” (1 Pet. 4:2-4), we are not to weaken.

Under the threat of the most severe persecution we must not betray our commitment. *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified... Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf”* (1 Pet. 4:12-16).

Our commitment must be persistent when choices are to be made. We must be predisposed to put the spiritual above the material. *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Mt. 6:33).

That means pulling your children out of ball games in time to get to Bible study or a gospel meeting. It means not permitting scouting trips on Sundays when worship is to be omitted. It means skipping the prom. It means not putting family reunions above worship. It means planning ahead on trips and vacations so we can find brethren

with whom to worship faithfully on the Lord's Day.

PERVASIVE. Our commitment must be pervasive: it must involve every part of life. Not only must we be committed to the Lord and His will when we assemble to worship, but that commitment to the Lord and His word must follow us home. In the family circle the principles of truth must prevail in all the relationships which concern the *home*. Commitment to the Lord will make a woman a better wife and a man a better husband. It will make better parents and more respectful and obedient children.

Commitment to the Lord goes to *work* with a Christian. It determines his attitude toward superiors and toward the task to be done. It regulates relations with other workers. It controls the tongue so that it avoids gossip, profanity, or vulgarity and becomes marked by grace, seasoned with salt (Col. 4:6). It goes into the athletic contest with a Christian. He gives his best but does not retaliate for the late hit or the elbow to the jaw under the backboard, or the trash talk from others in the game.

**SACRED TRUSTS
COMMITTED TO US.**

Gospel preachers have been entrusted with a sacred message.

Paul said he had been "*put in trust with the gospel*" (1 Th. 2:4). It is not our message to treat as we please. It is a *great* commission. We must deliver the message without change.

Elders have a sacred trust. They are to "*tend the flock over which the Holy Spirit made them bishops*" (Acts 20:28). They shall "*give account*" for their watch over souls (Heb. 13:17). They must stand before the "*chief shepherd*" (1 Pet. 5:4).

All *saints* have a sacred trust. The faith was "*once delivered to the saints*" (Jude 3). We are the custodians of that same message delivered by inspired men. We must be faithful to the task. We must not only hold to the faithful word in our own lives, but also see to it that it is handed down to the next generation faithfully. We are rapidly losing a whole generation of gospel preachers but more than that, a generation of faithful saints who have stood the test of time and remained true to the Lord to the very end of their days. The younger generation must be prepared to step up and go forward with the greatest work in the world. What kind of a trustee are you?

Our *children* are a sacred trust committed to us from the

Lord. They are an "*heritage*" of the Lord (Ps. 127:3). That means they are a legacy, a gift. Their training and development are of paramount importance. Take care to bring them up "*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*" (Eph. 6:4).

Marriage is a sacred commitment. It is God who "*binds*" husbands and wives together (Mt. 19:6; Rom. 7:1-4). The privileges and duties of this special relationship are ordered by the Lord.

Our *souls* have been committed to us by the Lord. Soul is used here to mean spirit. We are not our own but have been bought with a price. God is to be glorified in our bodies and spirits which are His (1 Cor. 6:19-20). This is the only part of us that will survive the death of the body. "*We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*" (2 Cor. 5:1). What are you doing with that immortal spirit which God committed to your trust?

Are you truly committed to the Lord?

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