

COMMITMENT

Q: What is commitment? What does it mean?

I. We should be 100% committed to God. Why?

1. We belong to God! We have been purchased by Him! (I Cor 6:19-20; Mt 20:28; Ps 74:2; Acts 20:28; I Cor 7:23; I Pet 2:9; Rev 5:9, 14:4)
2. We are God's children. God is our *loving* heavenly Father. We are heirs of God with a glorious, eternal inheritance to look forward to (Jn 1:12; I Jn 3:1-2; Rm 8:14-17; Gal 3:26-29, 4:4-7; Eph 1:3-5, 2:4).
3. We are "enslaved" to God and should be "slaves" of righteousness (Rm 6:18-22).
4. God is looking for and will strengthen people who are fully committed to him (2 Chron 16:9).
5. We have been given some biblical examples to emulate:
 - a. Job (Job 1:1-2)
 - b. Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego (Daniel 3:1-30)
 - c. Apostles (Acts 5:40-42)
 - d. David (I Sam 23:13-17)
 - e. Paul (Acts 20:17-24)
 - f. Jesus (John 8:28-29)

II. Our Commitment to God should be evidenced by our attitude and actions.

1. We should love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind and focused on glorifying and honoring Him (Mt 22:34-40; I Cor 6:20, 10:31; Col 3:17; Phil 1:20-21).
2. We should want to obey Him and His teachings (John 14:15, 21, 23; I John 5:3).
3. We should be committed to His church – via attendance, service and support (I Cor 12; Heb 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-47).
4. We should be committed to God with our time, talents and treasures (\$).

Remember the following biblical principles:

Principle of Creation:

God is the Creator! (Genesis 1; Ps 33:6, 100:3, 104, Heb 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5)

Principle of Ownership:

God owns everything! God owns all resources, including our time, talent and treasure. (Ps 24:1, 50:12, 89:11, 100:3; I Cor 4:7, 6:19-20, 10:26; Mt 25:14-30)

3 Views of Ownership:

	<u>God</u>	<u>Me</u>
View #1	0%	100 %
View #2	10%	90%
View #3	100%	0 %

Principle of Accountability:

We are accountable managers (stewards) of His resources which He has loaned us (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:11-26; I Cor 4:5)

Principle of Earning Trust:

By managing earthly resources well, we earn a greater level of trust with heavenly resources and responsibilities. We will also receive eternal rewards. (Mt 6:19-21, 19:21, 24:42-51, 25:14-30; Lk 12:33, 16:10-13, 18:22, 19:11-26; I Tim 6:19)

The way of the world is to be a "getter" (look out for number one and get whatever you can); the way of the Lord is to be a "giver" (look out for the interests of others and give to help people and the work of the Lord). Following are some biblical principles that apply to giving:

- a) Our motives for giving can include: Love for God (Mt 22:34-40); Appreciation (Mt 10:8); Stewardship/Management responsibility (Mt 25:14-30); Obedience (Jn 14:15, 21 I Jn 5:3); guide our hearts (Mt 6:21); demonstrate that God is #1 (Mt 6:24).
- b) Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive! (Acts 20:35).
- c) God is a giver and set an example for us! Jesus gave His life for us! (Romans 8:32; John 3:16, 15:13).
- d) We will reap what we sow (i.e., if we give generously we will be rewarded generously; if we are stingy we should not expect much in return) (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 9:6; Gal 6:7-9). God will justly reward our sincere giving (Heb 6:10). *Our giving pleases God* (Heb 13:16).
- e) Generous people will prosper and have their own needs met (Prov 11:24-25; Eccl 11:1-2). Generous people will be blessed (Prov 3:9-10, 19:7, 22:9; Psalms 112:5).

- f) Giving should be voluntary, not under compulsion. Giving should be done cheerfully (2 Cor 9:7).
- g) Giving should be regular and proportional (I Cor 16:2). Tithing (10% of gross income) is a useful standard for measuring the minimum giving (Gen 14:20; Lev 27:30-32; Num 18:20-32; Mal 3:8-10; Luke 11:42).
- h) Giving to God should be our first priority (Prov 3:9-10; Mk 12:41-44).
- i) We should seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, and He will meet our earthly needs (Mt 6:31-33). We should avoid a consumptive lifestyle and be content with what we have (Lk 12:15, 3:14; I Tim 6:6-11; Eccl 5:10; Heb 15:5-6).
- j) It is wise to save on a regular basis, both for short-term needs and to reach long-term goals (Prov 6:6-8; I Tim 5:8), BUT we need to avoid hoarding and placing our trust in our wealth (Prov 11:28; Eccl 5:13; Lk 12:15).
- k) Giving and helping others are acts of love; true love involves actions and not merely words (Luke 3:11; James 2:15-16; I Jn 3:17-18).
- l) We should excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor 8:7).
- m) Generally, giving should be done secretly (Mt 6:1-4), but can be done publicly if motives are to glorify God and encourage people (not to glorify self) (Mt 5:16; I Chron 29).

CASE STUDIES: *Widow with the mites (small coins)* (Mt 12:41-44; Lk 21:1-4); *Mary of Bethany* -- one of the most significant people in the New Testament. More scripture on her than 10 of 12 apostles. Jesus held her in high regard, partially because she was a true giver (Lk 10:38-42; Jn 11:1-46; Jn 12:1-8; Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9)

- 5. We should strive to consistently represent God well! We are His Representatives, Witnesses and Co-workers (Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:20, 6:21; I

Cor 3:9). We need to help fulfill the Great Commission – making disciples (Mt 28:19-20).

To accomplish this role well, we need to be “in the world, but not of the world”. We need to avoid isolationism, and need to spend time with and relate with:

- Other Christians (I Cor 12; Heb 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-47; Rom 15:1-7; Phil 2:1-5; John 17:20-23, 13:34-35, 15:12-13; Rom 12:10; I John 3:11-19, 4:7-21; Luke 10:25-37).
 - Non-Christians (John 17:13-18; Mat 5:13-16, 9:10-13; Mk 2:15-17).
6. We should strive to grow more like Christ each day (Eph 4:13; Rom 8:9). Consistently practicing the spiritual disciplines will help! (e.g. prayer, bible study, worship, fellowship, etc.).
 7. Our commitment to God should be RADICAL, and include the willingness to lose everything including our lives for Him! (Luke 14:25-33; Mt 10:32-39; John 15:13; Phil 3:7-8; many biblical examples).

III. Our Commitment to God should lead to a high level commitment to our marriages and other relationships with people.

We should be committed (loyal) to those we have relationships with. We should be careful of turning our back on people like the following bad biblical examples:

- 1) Achan was disloyal towards God and Israel. He valued things (riches of Canaan) over relationships (Joshua 7:1-26).

- 2) Israelites were disloyal towards Moses & Aaron. The people refused to follow their leadership, and put their own comfort first (Numbers 14:1-5, 27-32).
- 3) Delilah was disloyal to Samson. She valued money over her relationship (Judges 16:4-21).
- 4) Judas was disloyal to Jesus. He also valued money over relationship (Matthew 26:14-16).
- 5) Demas was disloyal to Paul. He placed the “world” over his relationship & ministry with Paul (2 Tim 4:10).

On the other hand, we do have some positive biblical examples:

- 1) Moses was committed (loyal) to God’s people (Hebrews 11:24-27).
- 2) Jonathon was loyal to David and vice-versa (I Sam 20:1-42).
- 3) Esther was loyal to the Jews (Esther 3-7) and she was loyal to Mordecai (Esther 2:20-23).
- 4) The three mighty men were loyal to David (2 Sam 23:13-17).
- 5) Israelites were loyal to Joshua (Joshua 1:16-18).