

Committing to Christ

Luke 14:25-33

Introduction:

We are taking progressive steps toward living the maximum life in Christ, from John 10:10.

We asked and the Bible answered the question, what am I doing here?

We considered our values and the source of them, whether culture or Christ.

We looked at how God formed us and what functions He designed us to carry out.

To take the next step in living the life God wants us to enjoy, it is extremely important that we answer the question before us today; Will I commit to Christ?

Jesus said He came, that we “may have life, and have it abundantly.”

The Bible tells us to guard our heart with the utmost care because the value-system we treasure most charts the course of our lives with our destiny, heaven, or hell, being up to us.

This choice is perpetually made by either following the Word or the world.

Will you commit to Christ?

Robert Bellah and four other authors worked together to write a book called, *Habits of the Heart*.

The book is about individualism and commitment in American life.

Their book reveals that our society fears commitment.

We like individual freedom; We like having options; We want rewards on our terms.

Committing to Christ goes against our society’s norm.

This is nothing new, however.

Listen to Paul, in Romans 12:1, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship.”

Committing to Christ means more than making a decision about Jesus.

I. Why Would We Commit to Christ?

Commitment to Christ is part of God's plan for our life.

Ephesians 2:10 tells us, “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

It is God's plan for us to commit to His Son and do good things as His body or bride on earth.

Commitment to Christ is how God made Salvation possible.

God saves us by calling us to a holy life, because of His own purpose and grace (2 Timothy 1:9).

“He outlined the process, purpose, and basis of salvation. The process of salvation is a call from God to share in his kingdom. The call has been ‘made outwardly by the preaching of the gospel, inwardly by the influence of the Spirit working through the word.’¹² The purpose

of salvation is that each believer might produce a life of obedience and holiness to God instead of self.”¹

Our dedicated, committed service is a means of expressing thanks to God for our salvation (Romans 12:1).

“By the grace of God” we are what we are by “[God’s] grace toward [us]” (1 Corinthians 15:10).

God promises to reward commitment to Christ.

In the following three passages listen for the commitment and the reward.

Matthew 6:33, “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...and all these things (fundamental human needs) will be added to you.”

Luke 6:38, “Give (to whom? The context reveals friends and foes) ...and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure— (explained as) pressed down, shaken together, and running over.” Notice the next line of this verse, “For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

The reward for committed service will be disproportionate to our efforts, as Luke 19:17 highlights, “Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over then cities.”

Why would we commit to Christ? Because it is part of God’s plan for our life, the only way to receive salvation, and it comes with great promises of reward!

II. Why Would We Not Commit to Christ?

Nearsightedness causes resistance.

Only living in the moment, not taking a long look into the future is nearsightedness.

Nearsightedness looks for the easy thing, the closest thing, the quickest thing.

In Mark 4:19 Jesus said, “...the worries of the age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

Focusing on the immediate causes us to lose sight of the important.

We lose sight of real values.

The apostle John said in 1 John 2:17, “The world is passing away and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”

The bigger and better payoff comes after a long time; commit to the greater reward.

Selfishness causes resistance.

We think we know how to best live life until life has problems that bring us to our knees or that lay us flat on our back.

God designed us. God knows best.

Humility factors into most questions about our commitment.

Jesus said in Mark 8:35, “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.”

Commit to the selfless Christ.

Fear causes resistance.

We ask ourselves questions before any commitment.

¹ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol. 34, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 191. ¹² J. E. Huther, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to Timothy and Titus* (1884; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1983), 211.

What will it cost? How will it change my life? Can I stay the course?
Some questions build an unhealthy fear. What will others think? What if I fail?

The devil will use fear to our destruction.

Do we trust God's wisdom? Do we trust God's love?

When will we come to accept what Hezekiah said in 2 Chronicles 32:7, “Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed...for the one with us is greater than the one with him”?

Paul pointed out, “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:37-39).

There is nothing to fear in committing our lives to Christ.

Truly, there is no legitimate reason for not committing to Christ.

III. How Do We Commit to Christ?

Commitment to Christ requires obedience to the Gospel’s call (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

Recognize the lost condition of a sinner.

Believe that Christ came to help every sinner.

Resolve to turn away from sin and follow God.

Confess Jesus to be Lord—master, ruler of your life.

Following God’s will leads to the faith-response of baptism, where believers participate in Christ’s death and where the power of His blood gives a new life to all who obey.

All Christians need to be reminded that following Jesus is a daily commitment.

We must yield full control to His power and grace, with the full resolve, “not my will, but Yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

Commitment to Christ requires that we calculate the cost.

In Luke 14:25 and following, the passage _____ read with us earlier, Jesus was bold and clear about commitment.

Jesus wants us to understand, every commitment has benefits and prices to pay.

Now we decide if the benefits outweigh the cost.

Is the cause worth the costs?

Anyone who commits to Christ will be giving up certain things.

A person commits to Christ by giving up personal sovereignty.

God has given us the gift of choice to direct our lives.

This is where we call the shots and make the decisions on how to best live life.

We choose how much influence the Almighty God will have in our lives.

Committing to Christ is the best response because by doing so, we acknowledge God knows best.

This commitment is seen in Paul’s statement, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Personal rule or control in one's life is extremely valuable.
Is the high cost of giving it over to Christ worth paying?
A person commits to Christ by giving up the personal priority of all resources.

When a person commits to Christ the person relinquishes all resources.

It is no longer our time, but God's times.
It is no longer our money, but God's money.
It is no longer our property, but God's property.
It is no longer our talent, knowledge, wisdom, opinions, behavior, preferences, reactions, friends, or family; it all belongs to God and it is all for His use.
What are we doing here? We are supposed to be accepting God's purposes for our lives.

When we accept His purposes for our lives, we discover clarity on the reason we have possessions, their purpose in our lives, and what to do with them to glorify God.

We become stewards of all resources that God allows us to possess.

Is relinquishing personal priority of all resources too high a cost to pay for committing to Christ?

A person commits to Christ by giving up the pursuit of the worldly value system.

1 John 2:16 tells that the world values pleasures, possessions, and positions.

These things become wrong for us when we live for them instead of living for Christ, according to God's values.

Which do we care more about, worldly values or godly values?

Either way, we pay a price.

Is the cost of committing to Christ worth it?

Commitment to Christ requires that we decide between ourselves and the Savior (1 Peter 4:17-19).

Giving up personal sovereignty, giving up priority use of resources, and giving up on chasing the worldly value system, is exchanging the temporary rule, control, and pursuits for our soul's eternal salvation.

If we choose not to commit to Christ, what do we then give up?

We give up the best use of our life.

Personal joy and mutual benefit to others is a part of life.

Christ came that we may have this life...more abundantly.

We give up lasting satisfaction and fulfillment.

In essence, we exchange lasting, important things for temporary, unimportant things.

We exchange our soul for pleasures, possessions, and/or positions that do not last, even in this life.

We also give up eternal life.

The eternal bliss of Heaven is a loving gift and just reward for those who love God and do His will.

The alternative to the heavenly reward is also fair and just.
The choice is ours to make and God will honor our choice.
Look at the cost of the choices.
Ask yourself, "Which do I love more, self or Savior?"

Application:

The question of the day, "Will you commit to Christ?" requires serious thought, yet none of us know how long we have to think about it.

Christians everywhere set forth Paul's message in Romans 12:1, "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual-reasonable/rational service of worship."

Give God everything you have got...He will give you more than you ever thought you could have.

Where do you begin giving to God?

Hear the Word of God and believe the loving message of God our Creator and His Son who desires to save all of us.

Repent of past sins.

Confess Jesus, the Son of God, as ruler of your life and be baptized in obedience to God's will to contact the saving power of God through Christ's death.

Commit to live for Christ the rest of your life.

Conclusion:

Everyone wants salvation, but not everyone will make Christ Lord.

Please give this question serious thought; will you commit...to Christ...for a new life that will be eternal?

The choice is yours to make.

God will honor your choice.