

People of Commitment

Intro:

1. No limit to what people can do once they put their mind to it - Apollo program was U.S. answer to Russian rocket technology and JFK's challenge, assassination.
2. Of far greater import was the fulfillment of the commission to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15). Every trial, roadblock and obstacle imaginable was put in the way of first century Christians: nature (shipwrecks), government threat (Jew and Gentile), false teachers, worldliness, dissention, etc. were overcome by **commitment**.
3. The success of God's people in any age begins not with numbers, wealth, social approval but *genuine commitment*.

1. The Nature of Commitment

A. The Christian's commitment is **personal**.

1. Commitment of apostles due to personal, intimate association with Jesus:
 - a. Incarnation - 1 Jn 1:1-2; resurrection - Ac 10:38-43.
 - b. The apostles saw God living in human form - compassion, love, power, mercy, patience, forgiveness. They were committed to **a person**.
2. But how can Christians today be committed to a person they have never seen?
 - a. Testimony, evidence presented - 1 Jn 1:3-4.
 - b. Jesus, "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*" (Jn 20:29).
 - c. Commitment to the person of Jesus rests not upon sight but deeper qualities such as gratitude and love - 2 Cor 5:14-15.
3. Commitment to Jesus begins with who Jesus is and what He means to me.

B. The Christian's commitment is **total**.

1. Jesus demands top priority in our lives: Mt 10:34-39.
2. We should be totally committed to Jesus in:

- a. Mind (intellect, rationality) - Based on evidence concerning the person of Jesus and assurance that our eternal destiny is secure with Him - 2 Tim 1:12.
 - b. Emotion - While emotions are not solid foundation for commitment, certainly our emotions are engaged by the reality of our lost condition and salvation.
 - c. Will - Author of eternal salvation to all who **obey** Jesus - Heb 5:9.
- C. The Christian's commitment is **durable** - Rev 3:8-11. God gives us the strength and incentive to remain steadfast regardless of the situation.

2. The Weakening of Commitment

- A. Illus. A new car: wash, wax, vacuum, shine tires; our commitment to maintain care for it is strong until it gets scratched, faded, dinged and the new wears off.
- B. How does our commitment to Christ weaken?
 - 1. Doctrine - Led astray by persuasive false teaching, own ignorance - Gal 1:6; 3:1.
 - 2. Disappointment - Let behavior of others influence us to leave the Lord.
 - 3. Weariness - Gal 6:9.
 - 4. Idolatry - We simply decide to love something/someone else more than Christ.
 - 5. Affection - Perhaps the most dangerous; we diligently maintain a form of religion but have abandoned the true motives for serving Christ - Rev 2:4.
- C. Satan has many weapons with which to undermine our commitment to Christ.

3. Renewing Our Commitment

- A. Half-hearted commitment to *anything* makes for misery, hard work.
- B. Think of:
 - 1. The examples of others - Heb 12:1, looking back to ch 11.
 - 2. Christ, Himself - Heb 12:3.
 - 3. Seeing the Lord - Heb 12:12-14; 1 Cor 15:58.
- C. What unites people in commitment? Wars (threats); compassion (needs); honor or approval of admired person; common bond - family, nationality, etc. Christians have **all these incentives to be committed together in Christ**.