

LESSON 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMITMENT

1. The purpose of this lesson is threefold: (1) To review the commitment you made in becoming a Christian, (2) To review its significance, and (3) To learn the lasting benefits of real commitment. Understanding your commitment more fully will prompt you to “go on into perfection” (Hebrews 6:1). Perfection as used in the Bible does not mean sinlessness: rather it means to be “full grown” or “mature”. Thus, as a new convert or follower of Christ, you are a babe and will stumble and fall many times, but you must leave these mistakes and continue to grow.

2. Your decision to become a Christian is the greatest and most important one you will make in this life. It is a decision that will be costly to you in time, in work and in money. It will bring persecution and will require your all. As a Christian, you must remember your commitment to Christ because it won't always be easy to remain faithful to it.

(Question):

- A. It is impossible to live true to your commitment to be a Christian. **True or False**
- B. It will be easy and inexpensive to live the Christian life. **True or False**

3. Several sources of strength are available to you if you really want to live a righteous and godly life. One of the greatest help, if not the greatest help, is your Bible. As you “go on unto perfection” you will realize this more and more. For it is in the Bible that you learn of God and His will for you, His child. This is God's method of speaking to us.

(Question):

- A. The Bible is true because it contains God's will. **True or False**

- B. The Bible is true because through it God speaks to us. **True or False**

4. Though God speaks to us through the Bible, this is only part of the story. The other part of the story, prayer, is under your control and is another great source of strength. Through this avenue we can complete the communication link with God. Without it our lives are incomplete!

(Question):

To complete the communication link between you and God, you must:

- A. Wait for the Holy Spirit to descend on you. **True or False**
- B. Pray. **True or False**

5. Christ is a constant and ever present source of strength. We learn of His promise of comfort and strength from the Bible. Also, we learn that He is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). An advocate is one who pleads the case of another. Thus, we know Christ will help if we pray through Him and according to His will.

(Question):

- A. Christ is a source of strength to all Christians and is their advocate as well. **True or False**

6. Two other sources of strength which are available to the Christian and should not be overlooked are (1) assembling with the church to worship and (2) fellowshiping with other Christians. It is easy to overlook these as sources of strength.

(Question):

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- A. Fellowship and worship are two important sources of strength for the Christian. **True or False**

7. The Hebrew writer realized the importance of worship because he said in Hebrews 10:25, “Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is.” Great strength can be had from blending your heart in worship to God with those of like beliefs. Also, great strength can come from private, informal visits with fellow Christians.

(Question):

- A. The Hebrew writer admonished us not to forsake the assembly. **True or False**

8. In summary, five great sources of strength for the Christian are the Bible, prayer, Christ, worship and fellowship with fellow Christians.

(Question):

- A. Commitment and faithfulness to Christ will be strengthened by the five things mentioned above. **True or False**

9. A word of caution is in order at this point. Don’t be misled to believe that all who are in the church are living faithfully to Christ. To believe this is to invite discouragement and disillusionment.

(Question):

- A. All baptized members are faithful to Christ. **True or False**

10. There will be hypocrites who will offend and destroy, but don’t let these keep you from doing your duty. Because

someone else is doing wrong in no way alleviates you of the responsibility to do righteousness.

(Question):

- A. Some of the church lives a righteous and pure life. **True or False**
B. Some of the church lives a hypocritical life. **True or False**

11. Now let us review the steps leading up to your commitment to Christ and what each of them means.

12. Man has devised many ways to being saved; however, God outlines only one way in His word. Jesus is the way, the truth and the light, no man cometh unto the Father but by Him (John 14:6). This is God’s scheme of redemption, and when you committed yourself to God, you had to come through Christ. To attempt entrance through any other is to be branded a thief and a robber (John 10:1).

(Question):

- A. You can be saved by various ways as long as you are sincere. **True or False**
B. God says we come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ, and this is the only way. **True or False**

13. John further says in John 8:32, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” But what is truth? Christ through John says, “thy (i.e. God’s) word is truth,” (John 17:17). Thus we must seek words of truth for “there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death,” (Proverbs 16:25).

(Question):

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- A. We must rely on the Bible because it contains the truth. **True or False**
- B. We must rely on the Bible because we can be made free by it. **True or False**

14. Paul informed Timothy that “All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

15. Thus, the first step to real and lasting commitment is to learn God’s word either by hearing or reading. Hearing comes by the word of God according to Romans 10:17: “So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing y the word of God.”

(Question):

- A. Which one word best describes our first step to real commitment? **Faith or Hearing**

16. As you learned the word of God, you realized that faith was necessary to please God, Hebrews 11:6. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,” (Hebrews 11:1). Just any kind of faith, however, will not please God; it must be a faith that obeys if salvation is to result. James stated it this way in James 2:17: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, it is dead, being alone.”

(Question):

- A. Faith that leads to obedience saves. **True or False**

17. Noah and Abraham are two great examples of men with proper faith. These men had obedient faith! Notice that the Hebrew writer said of these men. “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,

moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith,” (Hebrews 11:7).

(Question)

- A. By fortune, Noah prepared an ark. **True or False**
- B. By faith, Noah prepared an ark. **True or False**

18. Concerning Abraham, he said “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went,” (Hebrews 11:8). This principle of obedient faith is taught repeatedly in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. I suggest you read the entire chapter before proceeding with you study.

(Question)

- A. By fear Abraham left his homeland. **True or False**
- B. By faith Abraham left his homeland. **True or False**

19. Two things which put you on the road to meaningful commitment to Christ are:

(Question)

- A. Hearing the word of God and faith. **True or False**
- B. Hearing and honesty. **True or False**

20. As we continue to search the all-sufficient scriptures, we find that we can’t stop at faith alone. James said, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only,” (James 2:24). We must, as Jesus directed, repent: “I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,” (Luke 13:3).

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(Question):

A. We can stop with hearing and faith. **True or False**

21. What is repentance: it is a change of will and mind toward the Father's commands and toward sin. A great Biblical example of true repentance is the apostle Paul, Acts 9: 1-31. Saul, as he was called prior to his conversion, was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians; however, due to the events, which transpired on the road to Damascus, he went into the synagogue and proclaimed Christ to be the Son of God.

(Question):

Repentance means:

- A. You are sorry for your sins. **True or False**
- B. Your life is changed and you no longer dwell in sin. **True or False**

22. Yes, true repentance is a change of mind and will (See Matt. 21:28-29). In terms of your new relationship to Christ, it means that you have resigned your job with Satan and are now employed by the Lord.

(Question):

As a Christian, you are to labor in the service of:

- A. Satan. **True or False**
- B. Christ. **True or False**

23. Then you learned that you must confess Christ if you expect Him to confess you before God, Matthew 10:32. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, his will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven."

(Question)

Confession of Christ is necessary if:

- A. One is to be saved. **True or False**

B. One is expects to have Christ confess him. **True or False**

24. Paul instructed the Romans, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," (Romans 10:9-10). This confession involves not only our speech but also our manner of living.

(Question):

- A. Confession is vital and necessary for one to be a Christian. **True or False**
- B. Confession is very important but not absolutely necessary for one to be a Christian. **True or False**

25. Our Savior, after His resurrection and just prior to His ascension speaking to the eleven apostles said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," (Mark 16:15,16).

(Question)

- A. Salvation is conditioned on faith alone. **True or False**
- B. Salvation is conditioned on faith and baptism. **True or False**

26. After Christ ascended to heaven, the church was established in Jerusalem as He promised. On that occasion, the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, the apostle Peter preached the first gospel sermon. In the course of his

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preaching he reminded the Jews that they had crucified, both Lord and Christ,” (Acts 2:36).

(Question):

A. Three prerequisites to real commitment to Christ are hearing, believing, and confession. **True or False**

27. Notice the reaction of the Jews to Peter’s preaching. “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). Peter replied, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). About 3,000 souls were baptized on that day.

(Question):

A. Baptism is commanded. **True or False**

28. Baptism is a burial or immersion, a complete covering as Paul explained to the Roman brethren in Romans 6:3-6. Turn and read this passage.

(Question)

Why is one baptized?

A. It is commanded for salvation. **True or False**

B. It is for the remission of sins. **True or False**

29. Through these steps, you committed yourself to Christ. When you complied with these commands, the same thing happened to you that happened to the Jews on Pentecost when the church was established – you are added to the church. “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

(Question):

A. One can become a Christian today in same way as those on Pentecost when the church was established. **True or False**

30. In this committed life several sources of strength are available. The list contains all of those discussed in this lesson. Select the proper ones and write the letter of your choice in the space provided.

- a. Bible
- b. Entertainment
- c. Fellowship
- d. Worship
- e. Obedience
- f. Concerns for others
- g. Prayer
- h. Christ
- i. Good moral people.

31. What is the greatest decision you can make in this life?

32. What important steps preceded your commitment to Christ as discussed in this lesson?

33. Now that you have committed yourself to Christ, you must not turn back; rather you must grow in this newfound relationship. The consequences of quitting or turning back are too terrible. Your Savior said, “No man, having put his hand to

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the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God”
(Luke 9:62).

(Question):

Why can one not turn back after beginning the Christian life?

- A. He will be unfit for the kingdom of God. **True or False**
- B. He will be lost. **True or False**

34. In II Peter 2:20-22, Peter indicates the lamentable condition of the fallen as follows: For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

35. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

(Question):

- A. Peter says the latter end is better with them than the beginning. **True or False**
- B. Their latter end is worse with them than the beginning. **True or False**

36. What is commitment and what does it signify?

37. Webster, in his Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, defines commitment as an “agreement or pledge to do something in the future,” or “the state of being obligated.” Thus, when you obeyed God’s commands for salvation you

made an agreement or pledge and obligated yourself to Him. In this committed arrangement, your life must conform to the standards outlined for followers.

(Question):

- A. Commitment is a _____, _____, or an _____.

38. Webster further defines commitment as an “open confession or declaration of allegiance to a cause or purpose.” This open confession began when you confessed Christ to be the Son of God with your lips. In this process your relationship to God and man has changed. Your first allegiance or loyalty is now to God and His Son Jesus Christ and no longer to this world. Your loyalty or lack of it is seen by the life you live.

(Question):

- A. Can you really be committed to Christ without others knowing it? **Yes or No**

39. The apostle Paul is a great example of someone being committed to Christ. He said in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

(Question)

From the passage we find that:

- A. Paul was crucified with Christ. **True or False**
- B. Christ lived in Paul. **True or False**

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40. Paul said that Christ lived in Him. I believe there was a reason for Christ's living in him and Paul indicates it in Gal. 2:20.

(Question):

Why did Christ live in Paul?

41. (Question):

How did Paul live in Christ?

A. By faith. **True or False**

B. By Christ's forcing Himself on Paul. **True or False**

42. From the discussion of commitment, it is evident that a mere verbal confession of calling on the name of the Lord is not sufficient if we are to please Him. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Thus we must involve our lives in confessing Christ. Paul commanded that we "present our bodies as living sacrifices" (Rom 12:1).

(Question):

A. Paul was unreasonable in making such a command.

True or False

B. Commitment involves the whole man. **True or False**

43. In this committed life, then we are obligated to serve Christ, His church, others and ourselves last. It is important that we seek the things noted above, and in the order listed.

(Question):

A. Christ must come first in our lives. **True or False**

44. You should not look upon this obligation, as being so burdensome that you can't fulfill it. Instead you should look upon it as a great privilege to live for Christ and tell others how He died for them also. Several great benefits will accrue from this committed life.

(Question):

The committed life is

A. A burdensome life but has benefits. **True or False**

B. A privilege. **True or False**

45. Some of these benefits are (1) joy, (2) contentment, (3) satisfaction and salvation in the life to come. You should be joyful that your sins were forgiven; after all, it cost the life of Christ. You should have contentment of peace of mind in knowing that Christ has saved you, if you remain faithful. You should derive great satisfaction in serving other. Christ taught that this was true greatness.

46. Lastly, you have the promise of salvation in the life to come because of your commitment. This one benefit alone would make it worth the cost of committing ourselves to Christ.

(Question):

What are several benefits which accrue from the committed life? _____

47. In conclusion, you have made the greatest decision of your life; you have committed yourself to Christ. You can't

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turn back because the consequences are too terrible. Several sources of strength are available to aid you in this state of commitment, namely, the Bible, Christ, Prayer, fellowship and worship.

(Question):

- A. Would you expect blessing to accrue if you became unfaithful to Christ? **Yes or No**

48. Christ required certain things of you before you could begin the committed life. These included hearing the gospel, believing in Christ, repenting of sin, confessing Christ and being baptized for the remission of sins. Through this avenue you pledged yourself to Christ; you obligated yourself to Him.

(Question):

How did you obligate yourself to Christ?

- A. By obedience to His will. **True or False**
B. By accident. **True or False**

In realizing the benefits that can accrue from the committed life, it is appropriate to ask, where do I go from here? I believe the answer lies in “Understanding Your New Relationship to God and Man” which is the title of our next lesson.