

Commit

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of making a complete surrender of our problems and situations to God, trusting in His sovereignty and power.

Duration: 51:37

Scripture: Psalm 37:1, Psalm 37:3-5, Proverbs 18:17, 1 Peter 1:5

Topics: "Commitment"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of committal and trusting in God's plan. He uses the example of Paul and the sailors in the book of Acts who were caught in a violent storm. Despite the dire circumstances, they cast anchors and wished for the day, ultimately putting their trust in God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of letting God defend and shape our self-image instead of trying to do it ourselves. He encourages listeners to commit their work and thoughts to God, allowing Him to establish and guide them. The speaker also shares personal anecdotes about his own journey to becoming a preacher, highlighting his shyness and lack of worldly experiences.

Transcript

Psalm 37 verse 1, fret not thyself because of evildoers neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity for they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good so shalt thou dwell on the land and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass and he shall bring forth your righteousness as the light in your judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him fret not thyself because of him who prospers in his way because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger and forsake wrath fret not yourself in any wise to do evil for evil doers shall be cut off but those that wait upon the Lord they shall inherit the earth for yet a little while and the wicked shall not be.

Yes thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be but the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance. And the fifth verse again commit your way unto the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass. Would you be seated.

The truth I want to share with you tonight is the truth of committal one of the most important truths that a Christian can ever learn. A Christian worker once publicly testified in one of our meetings as God has spoken to him about the matter of the complete committal of all to God and what this really meant. He said it had revolutionized his family life personal life and his ministerial life and I believe it.

Commit your way unto the Lord and as you commit God says now trust. Trust also in him and then what then he shall no doubt he shall bring it to pass. Wherever I go I find there are very hazy notions Christians don't really many of them at least do not seem to really completely understand what this text means what it really means to commit something into the hands of God.

Perhaps we know how to commit it but we don't know how to trust after we commit. Let's see how the word commit is used in the Bible this I think will help us to come to a better a clearer understanding of the meaning of the word. The first reference as far as I know in scripture is over in the book of Genesis where we read that Potiphar the man recall who bought Joseph remember he was sold twice and Joseph bought him the second time or Potiphar bought Joseph the second time at the age of 17.

Now Joseph apparently was not around the place very long before Potiphar made the discovery that he had a most amazing young man on his hands no matter what he asked to do it was done a hundred and one percent. And then Potiphar noticed something else that there's some kind of an unseen a beautiful influence working with this young man through him. There was a blessing, a blessing on everything he did.

So finally Potiphar gave him more authority and watched the situation and then he saw the blessing of God was being poured out on his house on his business and finally he was emboldened to make what what Joseph called a total committal of everything to Joseph. Joseph said my master has committed everything to me. And you know how thorough that committal was? It was so thorough that the account declares that Potiphar never even bothered his head about such a thing as an accounting.

He never ever asked Joseph what was going on. He never checked up to see how things were going. He never even asked what he had, what his assets were.

Matter of fact the Bible says that all that Potiphar bothered about was that's all he knew. And that helped me to understand the meaning of the word commit. Now there's an old saying that hell has no fury like a woman's scorn.

And if you remember the story of Potiphar's wife, I tried to get Joseph to sin with her, he refused to do this. And so she lied about him and told her husband one day that this Hebrew slave Joseph had tried to rape her and understandably her husband was very upset and he had Joseph thrown into the into the prison where the king's prisoners were all kept. Now Joseph was now around 27 years of age, terrible change and turn in circumstances, but it's in the hands of God.

And he wasn't long in the jail before the jailer made the same discovery that Potiphar had earlier made, that he had the most amazing person on his hands. And so we read in the same 39th chapter of Genesis that finally the jailer, he committed everything in the prison to Joseph, and it says the committal was so thorough that whatever happened in the prison Joseph did it. And the jailer had a breeze, all he had to do was pull out his hand once a month and take his paycheck, he didn't have to look after anything.

Joseph was in total and complete charge. That helps me to understand the meaning of the word commit. I put it in God's hands and then I take my hands off.

And that's the hard thing to do, very very hard to do. In Romans chapter 3 Paul asks this question, what advantage then does the Jew have, or what profit is there of the religious rite of circumcision? And he answers the question by saying, much every way chiefly because that unto them, that is unto the people of Israel, were committed the oracles of God. God committed his word to that nation.

And in spite of the vicissitudes of their national life, the ups and the downs, the declensions, apostasies, backslidings, and occasional revivals, and sometimes they had very wicked kings and sometimes they had floods of false prophets around, in spite of all this, God got the job done to that nation. He never changed the committal over a period of 1600 years. They were the official custodians and their godly men were the writers of the word of God.

And that committal was never changed. That helps me to understand. In John chapter 5 the Lord Jesus Christ said that the Father judges no man but has committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

That committal was made an eternity past and a lapse till eternity future. Paul knew about that because he said there is a day coming in which God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. And of course Paul knew about it in Acts chapter 17.

He said, God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained, whereof he has offered faith unto all men, and that he has raised him from the dead. God has committed all judgment unto the Son. That committal will never be changed.

Then Paul said to a younger preacher, Timothy, the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses the same, commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. You commit truth to some other person's mind and heart, that's in their mind and heart forever. You can't really take it out.

You can't really take it back. That helps me to understand the meaning of the word. Then we have a beautiful example of committal in the 27th chapter of the book of Acts.

Here is Paul and somewhat less than 300 people in a small cockle shell of a boat, and they are caught in a storm, a violent storm. Things look very bad, many days. Now there is a sun and a moon where stars appeared, and all hope that we should be saved was taken away, it says.

Then one night, and you know things are always worse at night when there is a storm blowing at night, and branches are coming off the trees and the hail and all this. It's always worse at night because you can't see what's happening out there. And one night the sailors in the boat, they thought they were drifting into shallow water.

There was only one thing could tell them that, and that was the thundering of breakers on reefs up ahead. And they began taking soundings, it says, and sure enough the boat was drifting into shallow water. So the Bible says they cast four anchors out of the stern of the boat, and they wished for the day.

And sure enough when day broke, they were off to an island, and the Bible tells us how there was two seas came together and they were pounding on the reef there, and they were in a very bad situation. You know sometimes you and I get in situations that are bad, they're so bad we don't want to make a decision because we don't really know which way to move, and we stay in that decision, and we don't want to do anything because it looks bad either way. And you sure don't want to make a mistake.

You know sometimes you get in a situation where you have to make up your mind, like the story of the two frogs walking down a country road, and one took a jump and he landed in this deep, deep rut, and he couldn't get out. And so his friend was at the top of the rut trying to encourage him, and he was making the biggest jumps he could, and his friend was helping, but it didn't work, and he just finally got all played out, and his friend said, I haven't a point for half an hour, I have to go. And so he's hopping across the field, and he hadn't gone too far before his froggy friend caught up with him, and he said, well how in the world did you get out of that rut? He said, man I had to, there was a truck coming.

And you know sometimes, someone has said that a rut, you know, is just a grave with both the ends knocked out, and sometimes we dilly-dally over a decision, we put it off for weeks and months and so on, and sometimes God brings a truck along, so brother you have to make up your mind, and that's not bad. So there they were, they're sitting in the morning, they're opposite this reef, what are they going to do? If it's a mud bottom in the ocean, the anchors will start drifting. If it's a rock bottom, one of those ropes may break, a stanchion may pull out of the back of the boat, the whole thing may rip off the back end of the boat, a fluke on an anchor might break, they just can't stay where they are.

So what do they do? Beautiful. The Bible says they cut the ropes and they committed themselves to the sea. Do you see what a beautiful picture of comitilad is? There was absolutely no way of going back to those ropes and those anchors in the sea.

If they changed their mind, it didn't make any difference, it was too late. One of the problems in the average Christian life is right here, that we always have one bridge, you know, we're over here in no man's land, but supposing the shelling gets too heavy out here with God and no man's land, and we always have one bridge left so we can skinny back where the average Christian is, where it's nice and safe and cozy. And what we need to do is to ask God Almighty to bring in the heavenly air force and bomb that last bridge.

So you can't get back. They committed themselves to the sea, but not really to the sea, they were committed into the hands of God, who stood by an angel the night before and talked to Paul and said, Paul, everybody on the ship will be saved, the ship itself will be destroyed, but not one soul will be lost, and more than that, I've given you everybody on the boat, which meant that everybody was going to be saved. And so it turned out in the marvelous providence of God.

But it's a beautiful picture of comitil. I don't know if you've ever read anything about some of the early Canadian explorers like Fraser, the Fraser River in British Columbia of course is named after this particular man. In my opinion, he was a very, very courageous person.

I don't suppose anybody here has ever ridden in a birch bark canoe. I had that privilege just once. They're just like a dream.

There's light as a cork, you can spin them, they don't have a keel on them. The one I was in didn't have seats, it had movable ribs so you could put heavier parcels by moving the ribs closer and all that kind of thing. But they're very, very fragile.

And there are frequent notations in the early explorers in their logbooks, you know, their diaries, notations of this kind, when is shorn gum, when is shorn gum, when is shorn gum. Now they didn't have Wrigley Spearmint back in those days. What are they talking about? Well you see those fragile canoes, they would be 30, some of them were 40 feet long, and they were built with small pieces of birch bark which were

laced together with the black spruce or black willow roots and then gummed with charcoal, a mixture of charcoal and spruce gum, and this was on the seams.

And of course these boats going down, they'd hit these big standing waves, a six foot standing wave in a rapid or something, and the thing would pound and it started leaking, so they had to go ashore and gum, and gum them, yes. Or on a big lake with big waves. And we have some big lakes in Canada, like Lake Winnipeg is almost 300 miles long, and they get some large, on Lake Superior they've had waves at 40 feet, I mean that's high, it's a lot higher I guess maybe than the roof of this building that's big.

And so they frequently had to gum these canoes. I mention this because Fraser said something that's very, very important. You know when he started off down the Fraser River, they didn't know it was around the next bend.

They were in mountainous countries. Have you ever seen the Fraser in flood time? It looks like a big, dirty, brown serpent just going down around the hills like that. And there's a place called Hell's Gate, if you've seen it, you'll know why it's called that.

These men didn't know anything about it except it's a big, turbulent, strong-currented mountain river. But they started off. But you know what he said? He said this, when once we were cast upon the bosom of that awful flood, there was no turning back.

And that's committal. That's committal. There is no way back.

And one of the reasons why our committals don't last is because they're not that kind of committal. We haven't made the committal in such a way that there's no turning back. We've got it planned and designed so we can turn back.

And it's not a genuine committal because of this. Now let me give you some examples of committal from some meetings we've had. A lady got up in Minneapolis and gave the following testimony.

It was just beautiful. She told us how she had five sons. And as a Christian mother she was so concerned they might be saved, she made them go to Sunday school.

They went to young people. Her husband, apparently, was not a Christian. She got no help from that department.

And the kids all grew up. None of them professed the faith. And finally they all got married and then they all moved away.

None of them were living in Minneapolis at the time. And she said, you know, two years ago I headed out with God. I got down on my knees one night.

I really told God what I thought. I said, God, I did everything a Christian mother should do. I pled all the promises in the Bible and I prayed by the hour and all the rest of it, and you never saved one of my children.

God, you really failed. And she said, people, that's when the action began. And God came to me in a very powerful way and God showed me that I'd been standing this way all those years, that what I called committal He called nothing better than wicked unbelief.

I had never really believed God was going to do it. I had prayed. I had cried and said, oh God, please do something.

But I didn't really believe He would. I'd never taken my hands off a situation. I'd never really put them in the hands of God.

And then just in simple faith, trusted God to do it, God showed me the whole thing. And she said, two years ago, He just broke my heart. And she said, that night I committed my five sons and their wives to God.

And all I did after that, every day I prayed and said, Lord, thank you that you're doing it. I thank you that you're doing it. And she said, people, that was two years ago.

My five sons and their five wives are all Christians. Now what God was not able to do in 25 years of fussing and fuming and fretting and wicked unbelief and all the rest of it, and making it worse by calling it faith, He was able to do in less than two years. When she came to Psalm 37.5 to commit and then trust, virtue of Saskatchewan, a lady came to me after a crusade meeting and she said, you know, my husband and I must have failed.

They also had five children. She said, my youngest is 22 years of age. He's an absolute rebel.

If I mention God, he just acts like he's demon possessed. He'll almost literally scream. And she said, my husband and I are both Christians.

And we wonder where do we fail? We just don't know what's wrong. I said, you ever commit them to God? She said, well, I don't know that I understand that. So we talked about it for a while and God showed her what it was all about.

And I said, now, remember you will commit them together tonight. Don't you ever take them out of God's hand. You take your hands off.

You let God do it. And I said, please remember this. When you make this kind of a committal, the situation may immediately get worse.

Don't panic when the situation gets worse. That just means God's got his hands on it now. God's doing it in his own way.

That's a hard lesson to learn. Very hard. Three months later, I got this beautiful letter from her.

I have it in the file at home. And she said, two weeks after you and I prayed, my youngest son, the rebel, he phoned me long distance and said, mother, I'm not feeling well. I've been to see a doctor.

He says I should take a couple of months off from work. She said, I almost hollered hallelujah on the phone. I knew right away that God was working.

So he said, she said, I told him, come on home. So he came home. She said, he lay there in the bedroom.

He laid in bed most of the day and he didn't eat very much. My mother instinct was to rush in there with the Bible and get him saved. She said, but I remembered what you said.

He's heard the gospel. He knows what the gospel is. The Holy Spirit's got enough to do it.

Now you keep your hands off and you let God do it. And she said, I did that. And one day I was walking past the door and he called up and said, mom, will you come in and pray with me? I want to receive Jesus.

Do you know what that young man is tonight? He's in Bible school, going to ministry. Now I don't know what's happened. I haven't heard from her since then.

What's happening so far as the rest of the family is concerned. I had a preacher friend. He had a serious problem in that his wife didn't think he should be in the ministry for 11 years.

He struggled with a problem. Not only did she tell him, like she told him, she'd say, okay, you tell me if God called you into ministry. Boy, he sure didn't call me.

And she used to tell him, why don't you go back to your tools? He was a first-class carpenter, a house builder and all that kind of thing. Why don't you go back to your tools? And sometimes he was tempted to do it because she not only told him, she sometimes shared this with people in the church. And he was having an awful time.

And he used to come in and ask me to pray with him for his wife. And I talked to him about committal. He didn't understand it.

You know, I was saying the other day in one of the meetings that when you're climbing a mountain, you can't see cause you're too close to it. You have to stand back about 10 miles to look at it. And some of us here, and I wouldn't doubt at all, but some people here tonight, your problem is so big, you can't see God.

And you're going to have to get detached from your problem and back off. So you can get a look at God and see who God is, and then make a committal of that entire problem into the hands of God. That's what we have to do.

If we're ever going to see the power of God come into these situations and the way in which the Bible promises that it can and it will, he shall bring it to pass. No doubt at all about it. He shall bring it to pass.

Not if all the signs are right. He shall bring it to pass no matter what the devil does, but all hell will. God will do it anyway.

He shall bring it to pass. If you'll trust and believe, if you'll take your hands off and let God do it in his own way. But you know, he couldn't see it.

And I preached on committal at a rally up in North Saskatchewan and he was there and he saw it. He saw it. Boy, he got out of that meeting and he committed his life into the hands of God.

You know what happened? She only lasted three weeks. I was preaching in Nipwin, Saskatchewan, gave an invitation and his wife came down the aisle one night. She was crying.

Could actually see the tears spurting out of her eyes, wringing her hands. When she got to the front of the church, she was walking in a pitiful little circle crying and wringing her hands. And a bunch of ladies came running over and they got her and took her off into a side room and they counseled and prayed with her and she met God.

And I was talking to him about a year back. He said, Bill, it was lasting and it was real. She goes out soul winning now, if you please.

A fellow came to me in a Vancouver crusade and he said, how do you get a Jehovah's Witness converted? I said, you commit them. And he said, what's that? Now, all his family, his wife and all his children were hot Jehovah's Witnesses. And they say, if I open, he said, if I open my mouth about God and the Bible, they tell me to shut up, that I don't know anything about it, that I'm just in the darkness, you know.

Well, I said, you commit them. So we knelt together. I showed him what the Bible said.

I said, okay, now remember you commit. And then what do you do? All right. He said, you trust.

Okay. I said, now your business from now on is to trust God and keep thanking God that you know God's going to do it. You don't know when, you don't know how, but he's going to do it.

He was back in the meeting the following night. He came up to see me after meeting. He was almost incoherent.

He was talking so fast and finally made me understand that one was already converted. One of his kids, the spirit of God got ahold of his heart and he was converted within 24 hours. You know, my own life, it's a product of committal.

I had a mother. See, I came from a broken home. My parents, I never ever heard my parents ever say anything nice to each other.

And my mother finally left. I remember my aunt coming over one time. I could never forget it.

She took a dirty old broom and she swept the table off with this broom and put some, you know, some dishes on the table. And we had a meal. I can see it yet.

A broom. And we had a lot of problems. Then my mother became a Christian and she came home.

I was 14 years of age then. My father said, your mother's coming back, but you don't have to listen to her religious talk. We didn't have a clue what that was.

She came home and she committed the whole family to God. She said, Lord, you're going to save them all. And I know it.

You know what happened? Guess what? All four of us found Christ and three of the four became preachers. My father got saved when he was 72 years old. But my mother said there came a day when, you know, my oldest brother was past 20 and I was just about 20.

My next brother was 19. My youngest brother was about 15 and none of us were converted. You know, the statistics, you know what they say? The statistics say if you're not converted by the time you're 19, your chance of finding Jesus Christ are very, very small.

Don't you believe it? As long as there's a God in the skies. You think God can only convert children? Where do you find that in the Bible? When my youngest brother got married, he was so opposed to God in the gospel, he and his wife, when they got along, they shook hands and promised each other they would never become Christians. So guess what he's doing today? He's an evangelist.

I mean, God knocks the whole thing into oblivion when people trust and when, when people commit and then trust Him. All right? What are we supposed to commit? The Bible even tells us that. For example, it says, commit the keeping of your soul to Him and well-being is unto the faithful creator.

Have you ever done that? Some people, you know, they receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, then they hang on for dear life. They're not sure, boy, that last five minutes on earth, that's the thing that really counts. If you're really in grace, you know, in the last five minutes, man, you're going to make it, but if not, zonk, off to hell you go.

And you know, a lot of Christians live that way. What the Bible says, commit the keeping of your soul to Him. Have you ever done that? The God who saved you can keep you.

He holds up our soul in life, it says, over in Psalm 66. We are kept by the power of God. What kind of power do you think God has? Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

If you've never done it, why don't you do it? Then the Bible says, commit your works unto the Lord and your thoughts will be established. You ever got a secular job? You know, a lot of people are worrying about tomorrow. They're not sure, you know, this job they've got, boy, they don't think they can really do it.

Why don't you commit it to God and let God do it through you? You know, I read something very interesting over in the book of Exodus, a man called Bezalel. God filled him with the Spirit of God, and I don't think he preached anything in his life, as far as we know. You know why God filled him with the Holy Spirit? So he could be a cunning workman, it says.

Do you ever think that God wants you to be a better carpenter than you are? A better schoolteacher than you are? A better farmer than you are? God wants you to be a better doctor than you are? Do you ever think of that? And he filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God so he could be a cunning workman. So commit your work, whatever your work is, if it's in the church or outside of the church, commit your job, your work to God. Then your thoughts will be established, then God will do it through you.

I don't know how in the world God ever put his hand on me to preach. People, I was the, you know, I say to people, and I really mean this, if I was to tell you my life story, I would take three minutes and two minutes would be wasted. I never robbed a bank, I never got drunk in my life, I never took dopamine, I never did any of these things.

I never did anything. And as I said the other night, I was so shy. I'll tell you, I was in classroom one time in about grade seven, and I had a friend, if I can call him that, and I had to make a speech.

I shook in my shoes for a whole month. A speech! And the teacher insisted on it. And you know what the problem was? My father was the caretaker.

And if I didn't do what I was told in the classroom, I got knocked in the middle of next week by my father when I got home. And that rascally friend of mine, I got up to the front, and I looked around, I took a deep breath, and my eyes lit on him. And he cut out with a pair of scissors, he cut out a figure of a man, looked like me, and he had a rope around the neck of the man, onto the pencil, and he was going like this.

Oh! I just went through the floor. And I was working in a logging camp, you know, and God called me to preach. I said, hey God, you're talking to the wrong person.

Someone else started with the same name. It couldn't be true. So I said, God, I can't.

I blush when I look in the mirror. Lord said, you have to do it. We battled that thing out.

What a battle we had. I put out two faces. I didn't think God could put a drop of water on us.

I made him so difficult, there was no way he could do it, and he did it. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. My mother committed me to God.

Boy, you commit and you trust people. That brings the power of God into your life. It brings the power of God into your home.

It brings the power of God into your church. Commit and trust your works to God. Then you're thought to be established.

A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Then I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause. Job 5.8. Have you ever committed your cause to God? There's a verse in Proverbs that says, he that is first in his own cause seems just that his neighbor comes and searches him.

There's a fellow I knew, and years ago he went to Camford Bible School. I didn't know anything about this, you know, but he apparently thought that I knew that he'd been kicked out of the Bible School. I didn't know a thing about it.

There's an old saying that if the fish had kept his mouth shut, he wouldn't have got in trouble. This fellow thought something that wasn't true. He thought I knew about it, I didn't know about it, so he wanted to defend himself and make himself look better to me, and so he said, you know, old man Hildebrandt didn't like when he kicked me out of the Bible School.

Well, I knew that Mr. Hildebrandt wasn't this kind of a person. So I didn't have all the facts. He that is first in his own cause seems just.

But eventually what happens, his neighbor comes and searches him. He tells a different story. You know how it goes.

There are three sides to every story. Your side, my side, and then the truth. That's hard to get.

Two years old, by then I was talking to a fellow, and we were talking, and he happened to mention this fellow's name. I said, you know, yeah, I said I went to Camford Bible School, and he went, and he said they kicked him out. I said, why? He said, well, they caught him stealing batteries out of cars.

Oh, that was the other side of the story that I didn't know about. Instead of trying to defend yourself, instead of trying to present a better self-image to the people out there, why don't you let God do it? Why don't you put it in the hands of God? Why don't you stop defending yourself? Why don't you follow the godly example of Jesus in 1 Peter chapter 2, it says, were to follow his steps who did no sin, who when he was, neither was guile found in his mouth, who when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself, and Marjorie says he committed his cause to him that judges righteously, and that's why Jesus Christ never had anything to say before Herod or Pilate.

Answers found, nothing, nothing. It was committed. How could he defend himself? That would be taking it out of God's hands.

Have you ever committed your cost to God? Your personal cost to God? If you're one of those people that goes around defending yourself all the time, the devil will keep you running, you won't be as busy as a one-armed paper hanger with a hundred-year itch. The devil will just keep you going the rest of your life, defending yourself. You know, when we cut pulpwood, we used to have what they called a strip, and they'd blaze trees, and they'd make a strip that might be 60 yards wide or 50 yards wide or whatever, and your business was to cut all the trees over a certain size, and that entire pulpwood strip, you had to make a straight road down the center and all, and you know, it was a matter of work hard or starve.

Well, as it fell on the next strip to me, we called him St. James because he was always bragging about St. James, which is where he came from, it's the suburb of Winnipeg, some of you will know that, but he never seemed to get much wood cut. And if you got down on your knees and looked under the branch line in the trees, you'd see him over there, and he'd be down on his knees beside his stump. Now he's dropped the tree, instead of sawing the tree up into four-foot billets, he's down there making the stump look nice.

You know, he's got his saw, and he's sawing the corner off the stump there, and he looks at it, and he gets his axe and chips away, because he wants everybody to think he's a real hot workman, see. And you could go down his pulpwood strip and look, I'll tell you, you'd think he'd gone over the thing with a vacuum cleaner, there wasn't a twig out of place. You know something? He never got any wood cut.

He was so busy projecting a pretty self-image to the people out there, he never got any wood cut. And that's the problem with a lot of Christians. They're afraid to do anything for free, they do it wrong.

They're always trying to shore up what they're doing. And I'll say again, the devil will work with you in that program the rest of your life. You commit your cause to God, leave it in God's hands.

There's an old saying, Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may. You do the will of God, and he'll take care of all the consequences, whatever they might happen to be. Now I want to introduce another matter of committal, a little incident in the Bible, and I'm going to use my imagination.

Will you allow me to do that? The first part is not my imagination, it's the word of God. Solomon had been the king, and under Solomon's leadership, the nation of Israel reached a zenith in popularity and wealth and wisdom and all the rest of it, glory, majesty, power, whatever words you want to use. But then Solomon died, and his son Rehoboam took over the kingdom, and Rehoboam did not have what his father had.

I mean, as far as wisdom was concerned. First thing he did, that was a very stupid thing, and he blew 10 of the 12 tribes. He lost 10 tribes.

He wound up just with Judah and Benjamin. Then it says he sinned against God, and so God allowed the Egyptian pharaoh called Shishak to come down with an army, and they just cleaned him up. Good.

Then they cleaned the whole country out. I mean, they robbed the country, they plundered everything they could find. And Solomon brought in all this immense wealth.

He had a navy coming once every three years from foreign countries, and they brought ivory and all the rest of it, and gold and silver. And boy, Shishak cleaned the whole country out. And Rehoboam was left with nothing.

Now they had a guardhouse, and there were 300 golden shields, 4 pounds of gold to every shield. Oh boy, just think, today's price of gold, 4 pounds on every shield, times 300, 1,200 pounds of gold. Well, Shishak took the shields also, but those shields were very important because when the king walked from his house to the house of God, the guard came and put the shields on and walked around him so that nobody could strike the king with an arrow or a spear.

So it was essential they had these shields. But they had no gold, so what they did, the account tells in the Bible, they constructed shields out of brass. And very often in the Bible, brass is a picture of the judgment of God.

Now, the Bible says that King Rehoboam committed the shields to the captain of the guard. Now, I'm going to use my imagination. The king has a little talk with the captain of the guard, whose name we don't know, so we're going to give him the name Dumbo.

The king says, Dumbo, I'm very concerned about the shield and the guardhouse because my life depends on this. As you know, you're the captain of the guard, and I've been just kind of thinking about this for a while, wondering who I could commit these to, and I finally decided that you're the one. I can really trust you.

I know you're with me, you're behind me 100 percent, and you've had a very reliable, wonderful record, and I'm going to commit. But now you must remember, Dumbo, that my life depends on those shields, and I just want you to be very, very careful. Take it seriously.

And Dumbo says, oh, King, I have a beautiful feeling in my heart that you trust me this way. And you know, really, King, it's a very small thing. You know, who has access to the guardhouse but myself and the guards? And he says, you don't have to worry about this.

King, don't even think about it again. Forget about it. The king says, Dumbo, you make me feel so good.

So Dumbo takes off, and the king's sitting there in the office, and then he begins to think, Dumbo, I'm not sure about that guy. He suddenly remembers something he heard about him one time, where Dumbo didn't shine too bright. He picks up the telephone, he phones him, he says, Dumbo, it's not that I don't trust you.

It was that he didn't trust me, but he didn't want to tell him that. He didn't want to be honest, you know. So he says, Dumbo, it's not that I don't trust you, and it's not that I'm worried.

Oh, he was worried, but he didn't want to tell him that. He said, I have a godly concern about the shield in the guardhouse. I'll hang on here.

Would you mind going out to the boys and count the shields and just let me know there's exactly 300 there. So Dumbo tears away and he gets the guys together. They're in a big flap, so the first time they count 299, the second time 301, finally the third time they get it right on.

300 shields, he roars back and says, King, we counted exactly, they're all there. The king says, Dumbo, just to hear your voice, it just does something for me. Thank you.

And they hang up. The king lasts a half an hour and he's in a cold sweat about Dumbo, no shields. Maybe he should have given more thought to it.

He phones him up, talks about this and that, and he says, Dumbo, Dumbo, now, I trust you implicitly with all my heart, but I just have this pressing godly concern about the shields. Would you mind counting them? I'll hang on. So Dumbo groans and he goes and he comes back and says, we counted the shields and it's exactly 300 there, King, like I said before.

He says, thank you, Dumbo. Thank you, thank you, thank you. And they hang up.

The king lasts 40 minutes. Shields in the guardhouse, they've really got him. Now, I noticed when he phones him the third time that Dumbo thinks he's a Dumbo, so he doesn't want him to think that.

Ah, he thinks of something, he phones him up, he says, Dumbo, you were telling me the other day your wife had the flu. How is she feeling today? Oh, King, he says, thank you for your concern, but my wife is just back in A1 health. She's completely over it.

Well, the king said, I'm glad to hear that. And since we're talking, would you mind counting the shields? Many of us have made a Dumbo out of God. Some of us have been doing it all our Christian life.

We've been checking up on God. Instead of calling it unbelief, which it really is, we tell God I have this godly concern. We don't believe God really has it.

We don't believe God is really working in this area. We're constantly putting our hands back on it, and we stop God from doing what he wants to do. And then if we commit something to God, and the situation gets worse, we panic.

We take the whole thing back out of God's hands. Obviously God's not working in the thing at all. And so we jump from one side to the other side, from one side to the other side.

We make a total Dumbo out of God. And we never face up to the fact that this is nothing more or less than wicked unbelief. And the Bible calls it that.

In Hebrews chapter 3, it says, Brethren, wherefore, brethren, take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, and departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily what is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. So you've committed something, a health matter, financial matter, your children for salvation or something else. You've committed it in the hands of God, and you're constantly checking up on God.

You don't really believe God's going to do it. And this goes on sometimes for 20 and 30 and 40 years. And then we wonder why God failed.

People, there's only one reason for it. Because God cannot and never does honor unbelief. And God always honors faith.

Commit your way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. God told David through Samuel the prophet that he was going to be Israel's king. But brother, it sure didn't look like it.

While King Saul had hurled a spear at him, almost got him, and was seeking him day and night. And he likened himself to a flea or a partridge in the mountain, being chased by a hunter. Scholars don't really know how long it was.

It could have been seven years. But he fled for his life. But God said, you're going to be Israel's king.

Boy, it sure didn't look like it. You know what he did? The Bible account says, he committed his cause to God. Then he left it there.

Twice he had the opportunity to take Saul's life. Once he and his men were hiding in a cave, and Saul came into the cave not knowing they were there. He came in alone, and David's men said, this is the day that God spoke about.

Give him the works, kill him, this is it, this is the day. God wants you to be the king. And David was going to do it, and his heart smote him.

He said, no I can't, I can't. I've committed him. How can I do this? I can't touch him.

He's in God's hands. I put him in God's hands. I can't lay my hand on him.

And he didn't. Another time, he and Abishai, that mighty man of valor, they were standing right beside King Saul, who was sound asleep out here in the field, and all the hosts of Israel around him. And God has sent a deep sleep on these people, and Abner, the captain of the hosts, he was a tremendous man of valor.

He was sleeping right here close to the king, but they were all sound asleep. And here was Saul's spear stuck in the ground, and his water bottle laying there. And David had asked who would like to go down with him to the camp of Israel, and Abishai was the only one that volunteered.

So they're standing there, and Abishai whispered, and David's here, and says, oh boy, take that. He said, let me take that spear. Let me smite him to the ground.

He said, I don't have to hit him twice. David said, no, you can't do that. He's committed.

I committed him to God. He's the Lord's anointed. I don't dare touch him.

What a beautiful picture. And he left him in God's hands, and God did it his own way, in his own time. Don't try and rush God up.

Why do you think the Bible says, wait on the Lord? Don't you think wait means wait? Some things God may do within 24 hours, as we said in some of the earlier illustrations. Others, remember, took three weeks. One took three months.

Another took two years. It may take five years. It might even be ten years.

Leave it with God. Let God do it. Believe him, then God will do it.

Jeremiah said, oh Lord, unto thee have I opened my cause. Unto thee have I given my cause. Then in lamentations he said, oh Lord, you have pleaded the causes of my soul.

God responded. Hezekiah got a threatening letter from the king of Syria. And boy, what they weren't going to do to tiny little Judah wasn't worth doing.

It was a blasphemous letter. What did Hezekiah do, panic? No. He took the letter, went up in the temple of God, he opened it and said, hey God, read this.

Read what this guy said. Well, he said that. He said, Lord, see.

Lord, hear. He committed it to God. No panic.

What happened? The angel of God that night went out to the host of Syria. And in the morning, 185,000 of their most valiant soldiers woke up dead. That's what it said.

When they awoke, they were all dead men. People, that's power. That's action.

But a man knew how to commit. That's when God works. You know, I fly a lot in jet planes and I read something that was a little disconcerting.

It wasn't quite that encouraging. It was a pilot. He said that these jet planes, he said they're not really airplanes.

He said they're huge masses of metal projected through the air by brute strength. You know, they're not designed to glide. I mean, if the motors quit, zonk, that's it.

A little old lady saw the story goes. She used to fly in a jet plane. She was really nervous.

She'd heard about this thing, you know, they're not airplanes. They just, you know, if the motors ever quit. And she was flying on a four-motor job.

And she'd get on the plane, and of course, they, you know, button up your seat or fasten up your seatbelts. And then will the flight attendants please be seated. And then they do that.

And of course, they pour the coal to it. And they start rolling down the runway. Boy, you can scream, shout, blow a trumpet, push all the buttons.

Nobody's stopping for you. You're committed, brother, whether you like it or not. But, you know, this little old lady, she was on the plane.

And they were going down the runway. And she was just wishing a thousand percent she could get off that thing. But she couldn't.

Then it took off. And it was up in the clouds. And she just happened to be sitting opposite the wing.

And she could see two motors out here and two motors out there. So she's watching these two motors. Then she watches those two motors.

Then she watches these two motors. Then she guards those two over there. Now, I don't know what she expected because there's no propellers on them.

But there was a young fellow sitting next to her and finally said, Ma'am, if you'd like to sleep, I'll guard the motors. But listen, I believe that many of us here tonight are just like that woman. We're committed, but we're not trusting.

We're not enjoying it. We're not trusting. You brought these matters before God.

You may have wept bitter tears before God. You have a broken heart. But you're not really trusting that God's going to do it.

And God can't do it. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. He that comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Faith, then you have to think immediately in terms of the trial of your faith being much more precious than a gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire. And sometimes it is. God said in Isaiah chapter 1, I will turn my hand upon you and purely purge away your dross and take away all your tin.

He only designs, you see, to take the cheap and the worthless away. And there may be a waiting period. But it's all in the plan of God.

Now please, you know, sometimes people say, Well, what does this do to the Bible teaching of perseverance and importunity and praying, you know, the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, or Jesus Christ praying the whole night through, praying, as it says in Hebrews, with strong crying and tears. What does it do to all of this? It doesn't do anything to that. It complements it.

You see, after I commit something to God, I don't stop praying about it. But whenever I pray about it, I pray in faith. That's all.

I may have a tremendous burden. I keep praying. But I pray in faith.

I'm not doubting. I know God's going to do it. He that fears the Lord shall come forth of them all.

And this, dear people, is the greatest secret that a Christian believer can ever, ever learn. Commit the keeping of your soul. Commit your way.

On Proverbs it says, the lazy man says, There's a line in the way. He doesn't want to go out. There's a line out there.

If that was King David, he'd go looking for the line so he could have a rug for the fireplace. Your works, commit them to God. Your call, commit it to God.

And you know what? Then you're free. Then you're free. But not until then.

Are you free? Or are you still making a dumb wall of God? Worrying and calling it faith. Fretting. And then trying to put a good faith on it.

Making a dumb wall of God day after day. Thinking that God can't do it. My dear friend, who is this God you love? Are there some limits to his power? He said, no.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. He filled the heavens and the earth. Our God is so great.

Do you think God has a problem? He has just one. Just one problem. Your unbelief and mine.

That's the only problem God has. You know what it says in the Old Testament? They turned back and tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. They put a limit on what God Almighty could do by their wicked unbelief.

How long will it be, God cried, ere they believe me? How long will they believe me? When they saw the miracles, they rejoiced and praised God and sang songs. Then the Bible says in Psalm 106, I think it is, they soon forgot. They soon forgot.

They turned back. They tempted God. They limited the Holy One of Israel.

And even the Lord Jesus Christ in His hometown Nazareth, He could there do no mighty works because of their unbelief. It says, except a few sick people were healed by His hands. They prevented Him from working because of their unbelief.

And dear people, we are doing exactly the same thing today. There are supposed to be millions of believers in North America. No doubt there are.

Are we really believers? Or unbelievers? Psalm 37, verse 5, Commit your way unto the Lord. Trust also in Him. And He shall bring it to pass.

Will you let Him do it? Will you? There is no greater challenge than this. I think I said all God wants me to say. We are going to sing in closing an invitation song.

This has been a school of prayer. Perhaps this is the most important lesson we could ever learn in a school of prayer. 560 is the song.

Pass me not, O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry. While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by. You may not even be a believer in Christ.

Maybe you've never been born again. We invite you to respond. Come slip away to the counseling room to my left over here.

If you're a Christian believer and God has spoken to your heart about unbelief, and you need to commit your life completely to God, and then you see one of the things is this, we keep on trying to commit things into God's hands, and the reason we take these things back out of God's hands is because we've never committed ourselves. And you can't commit things until you commit yourself. And so in a once and for all way, as Romans 6.10 says, let's commit ourselves totally into God's hands.

Everything. Then we can commit things to God. Amen.

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