

# Commitment

by Richard E. Bieber

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*Commitment to Jesus means choosing to love and serve him, his work, his saints, and the lost, and it's what will remain when the shaking is over.*

**Topics:** "Christian Commitment", "Faithfulness To God"

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## Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches about the importance of commitment to Jesus, emphasizing that God is preparing us for future events by working among us now. He highlights the need to be committed to Jesus Himself, His work, His saints (brothers and sisters in Christ), and the lost. Bieber challenges believers to move beyond mere symbolic acts or religious ambitions and truly commit their lives to Jesus, even when faced with challenges or disappointments.

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## Transcript

His voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken, as of what has been made, in order that what cannot be shaken may remain. Hebrews 12:26-27

God alone knows what surprises wait for us in the years ahead. But of this we can be sure: whatever earth shaking or heaven shaking events may be on their way, God is doing something among us now by way of preparation. And if we fit in with what God is now doing, we'll be ready for whatever comes.

It's not for us to know the times and the seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority - we don't know what's going to happen in six months. But we can know, and should know, very clearly what God's Spirit is doing among us now.

The Holy Spirit is working a work among us now very different from what he was doing a year or two years ago. He is dealing with us in an area which we've talked about a lot, but haven't settled: commitment. How that word commitment scares us!

Our lord never starts out by demanding commitment from people. When the blind came to him to receive their sight, Jesus didn't say, "First you have to commit yourself to me." He gave them their sight and left them free to decide what they were going to do with it.

Jesus never required commitment from the sick before he healed them, or from the hungry before he fed them. But as the multitudes increased, Jesus brought them to a place where they had to decide whether

they were willing to pay the price of going on with him as disciples.

"Now you've seen the Kingdom. I've shown you the wonders of the God of Israel. I've manifested his love before your eyes and I didn't ask anything from you. I didn't charge you a cent. But, if you want to come with me into this Kingdom it will mean that your life will no longer be your own, it will be mine. You have to commit yourself to me."

Now great multitudes accompanied him; and he turned and said to them, "If any one comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.... So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:25-26

This isn't just for the twelve apostles,  
or for those who want to be missionaries.

This applies to anyone who wants to be a disciple.

"But wait a minute," you say,

"We've done that... forsaken all.

We died with Jesus in our baptism.

We have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us."

Many of us have had ourselves convinced that these symbolic acts we've performed, or these sacraments we've entered, or these dramatic moments of surrender we've experienced have made us his. But have they? I doubt if there's a soul reading this who's even half serious about following Jesus who isn't going through a season right now where the Spirit is showing you how committed to Jesus you really are.

Don't confuse commitment to Jesus with commitment to your own religious ambition. Some of us will work day and night to advance along the lines of our own ambitions.

- Some plan.
- Some dream.
- Some unspoken lust for greatness.
- Some compulsion to prove ourselves to those who doubt us.

All the time we think it's Jesus we're committed to until Jesus comes along and calls us to take a step which will ruin our plan.

And some of us, for the past while, have been going through a reaction because we once committed ourselves to some man who claimed to be a servant of Jesus, or to some set of ideas which purported to be the truth of God, and we got burned.

- That man we were following let us down or turned out to be a phony.

- That "truth" we were following turned out to be lies and exaggerations so now we're sick of committing ourselves to anything.

And some of us are still so wrapped up in the cares and the riches and the pleasures of this life,

- our wills are so divided,

- our minds are so confused, that we can't find the strength to commit ourselves to anything.

"Maybe after my kids are grown.

Maybe after my house is paid for.

Maybe after I get a better job. But right now I couldn't possibly commit myself."

"But that's exactly what I'm calling you to do," says the Spirit.

- "Not after your house is paid for.

- Not after you've ravished your bitter soul in bitterness against brother so-and-so right down to the dregs.

- Not after you've established yourself as the Queen of the fellowship, or King Heavy Brother, but right now."

"I'm calling for commitment," says the Spirit, such as the saints of this generation have never known."

Commitment to the person of Jesus, not to ideas and theories about him, but to Jesus himself.

And that commitment to Jesus is a commitment of love. When you marry, you make a commitment to love this person as your own flesh as long as you both shall live. And you love this person, not just with words, but with deeds. For better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health.

But the commitment of love to the Son of God is far beyond the love-tie between man and wife. So far beyond it that by comparison all other love becomes hate. Indeed, when this tie with God the Son is threatened by any other love, that other love becomes hate.

- So that Jesus is my life.

- So that Jesus is so totally the owner of my heart that I can survive the loss of anything but him.

Paul didn't suffer the loss of all things so that he could win a place in the Kingdom or even so that he could win souls. He suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse so that he could win Christ and be found in him. His commitment, first and last and always, was to Jesus.

"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21

Oh, the things we let ourselves get wrapped up in! The things we hold on to as if they were life itself. The battles we fight over trivialities; when the one love which deserves such loyalty is left to wither. God bring us back to the love of Jesus! To love him with a life which is committed to nothing as it is committed to him.

But how do I know that I'm committed to Jesus Christ? Again the Holy Spirit is showing us as never before ...

1. that if we are committed to Jesus, we are committed to his work.

We don't just gaze at his picture with tears running down our cheeks.

We get under his yoke.

We work at his side.

We pull the load with him.

We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day.

Night cometh when no man can work. John 9:4

Our meat and drink is to do his will and to accomplish his work.

Jesus opens our eyes and lets us see what is to be done. No longer do we sit around wondering when the Lord is going to give us something to do. There it is, right in front of us - a sea of humanity that needs to hear the truth spoken to it, one-soul-at-a-time. All we have to do is draw near to this man, listen to this woman, help this child.

And no longer is this work something we can take up today and let go of tomorrow, it's our life. We're committed to it because we're committed to Jesus.

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

I Corinthians 15:58

"And let us not grow weary in well-doing. For in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."  
Galatians 6:9

So next year if we're still here, we're still working under that yoke. And the next year, and the next. Where would we be if we didn't have this work Jesus gives us to do?

2. The Spirit is showing us that if we are committed to Jesus we are committed to his saints - committed to our brothers and sisters.

"A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another ... as I have loved you... that you love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples.... if you have love one for another." John 13:34-35

The proof of our love for Jesus is our love for each other. We may think we're living in mystical union with the Lord, but if we're loaded with attitudes toward each other, if our heart toward our brother and sister is hard and critical, our union with Jesus has to be false.

And that love for brothers and sisters is more than a warm feeling. It's a commitment to them.

- To serve them.

- To pray for them.
  - To share what we have with them.
- A commitment to all my brothers and sisters.
- Not just that little clique I feel tender toward.
  - Not just the brothers and sisters who make me feel secure.
  - But the hard ones.
  - The ones way out on the fringe.
  - The young ones, and the old ones.

Sometimes in our assembly we draw very close to certain brothers and sisters, yet haven't even taken the trouble to learn the names of others we see week after week. It's got to be a commitment to all our brothers and sisters - even those who don't seem to like us.

The love Jesus tells us to have for brothers and sisters has nothing to do with whether they love us back, or whether they respect us.

We love them, serve them, pray for them, share our substance with them regardless of how we feel they feel toward us.

3. The Spirit is showing us that if we are committed to Jesus, we are committed to the lost.

The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

What a love he has for those lost sheep! Surely if we love him we can't see those lost ones in any other way. If we love him we're going to love them.

He came to call sinners to repentance and to call them to repentance Jesus had to go out and find them. For the sake of his Father's love, Jesus was committed to those lost ones. And so are we.

- Committed to finding them.
- Committed in Jesus' name to the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind.
- Committed to those the world has forgotten.

We don't jam the gospel down the throat of those who won't repent. We don't cast pearls before those who have made clear they despise everything that's holy. They're not lost. They know where they are. They've chosen their personal hells. But to the captives, the wounded, the broken, the forgotten, we are committed.

We don't have any choice -

"Would we like to reach out to these lost ones or wouldn't we?"

No, we're committed!

- We've made it our obligation!

We're in such a debt of love to our Lord that we cannot but go out and find those who are still wandering in the darkness and bring them home.

It's not for us to know the times and seasons which lie in God's future. They belong to him. But the season we're now in is the season when the Holy Spirit is teaching us all about commitment. When this season comes to an end, the uncommitted and those who are committed to their own ambition will have been driven away like chaff in the wind. Only the solid unshakeable will remain.

His voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken, as of what has been made, in order that what cannot be shaken may remain.

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