

“Are You Committed To Jesus Christ”

Joshua 24: 1 & 14 – 25; Luke 14: 25 - 35; Revelation 3: 14 - 21 **Romans 12: 1 – 2 (Sermon)**

I recently read that there are over 100 million Christian Church members in America.

However, when you watch the 6 o'clock news you have to wonder why the Church of Jesus Christ is not making a bigger impact on moral and spiritual values in the U.S.

It is also well documented that the number of Christians attending church in the U.S. on Sunday morning is declining at an alarming rate.

In Dr. Charles Stanley's book, *Confronting Casual Christianity* he said, *“God's people have made a decision about Jesus but tragically they have never made a commitment to Him.”*

You see there is a major difference in making a decision for Jesus Christ and making a commitment to Jesus Christ.

Once you have asked Jesus to save you from the penalty of your sins Jesus asks you to make Him the Lord of your life.

God's word to us today challenges each of us to think about our commitment to Jesus Christ.

Everybody is committed to something.

Some people are committed to making money, some are committed to their family, to their job, and other people are committed to self gratification.

So the question before each of us this morning is; ***“Am I Committed To Jesus Christ?”***

In our text from Romans this morning the Apostle Paul made a clear call for commitment when he said, ***“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”***

Notice Paul urged Christians to offer their bodies as a living sacrifice.

Since The Book of Romans was written to the church at Rome we know Paul is not questioning their salvation when he said, ***“offer your bodies as a living sacrifice.”***

Paul is talking about their commitment to Jesus.

Those Christians had made a decision to follow Jesus however they were not totally committed to Jesus Christ.

Today we have to be totally committed **if** we are to be effective Christians.

Also notice Paul said, ***“I urge you.”***

Paul did not say, *“I command you.”*

You see commitment is voluntary.

You cannot successfully legislate commitment.

That is why over 50% of marriages in the U.S. end in divorce.

When a couple voluntarily makes a decision to be married they promised to love, cherish, and honor each other in all circumstances for life.

They are legally bound to each other for life.

If they made a real commitment to live for each other there would be no divorce.

You see a real commitment is based on love for the other person.

At first glance a *living sacrifice* sounds like a contradiction.

Today Christians do not offer animal sacrifices because Jesus, The Lamb of God, voluntarily suffered, shed His blood, and died on the cross for our sins.

Jesus took our place.

God forgives our sins when we in faith ask Jesus to be our savior.

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice since He is God Himself!

Therefore, when we accept the substitutional death of Jesus no further blood sacrifice is necessary for the payment of our sins.

What Paul is saying is since Jesus died in our place we should want to live our life for Jesus.

Paul is urging every Christian to continually offer all of ourselves, body, mind, and will to Jesus Christ.

God is interested in all of you.

There is no such thing as partial commitment.

Remember the story of the farmer who wanted bacon and eggs for breakfast.

For the chicken, giving the egg was a simple donation.

But for the pig the bacon meant a total commitment.

To commit ourselves to The Lord means to yield our will to Him, entrust our life to Him, and place all that we have and all that we are at The Lord's disposal.

Every Christian should want to be totally committed because Jesus died so that we could live.

Every Christian should want to be totally committed to Jesus because of all that God has done for us.

Take a moment and think about all that God has done and is doing for you.

Who gives you life and who allows you to live on His earth?

Who allowed you to get out of bed this morning?

Who gave you a mind to think, hands to work, and eyes to see God's beautiful creation?

Who gives you freedom, hope, peace, and joy?

It is only by God's grace that you had a place to sleep last night and something to eat this morning.

Who saved you from spending eternity in hell?

Since we are all sinners it is only by God's mercy, God's love, and God's grace that we are not consumed each day. (Lamentations 3:23)

If we were really thankful of all that God has done, is doing, and will do for us we could spend the next hour in a prayer of thanksgiving.

That is why in the last part of verse 1 Paul says choosing to live for Jesus is "***your spiritual act of worship.***"

The only acceptable worship is to offer ourselves completely to God.

In verse 2 we read; "***Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.***"

Note this is a command.

As Christians we are called to live the way Jesus taught.

We are called to live like children of The King.

As we read and meditate on the scripture and apply God's Word to our life, the Holy Spirit will transform our minds.

Remember 2nd Corinthians 5:17 tells us, "***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!***"

Then in the last part of verse 2 we find the result of being totally committed to God.

"That you will know God's will and that you will be able to test God's will".

That should be the bottom line for all of us. Knowing and applying God's will is what is pleasing and acceptable to God.

God created us for His pleasure and created each of us for a specific purpose.

So knowing and applying God's will in our daily life is our purpose.

So the questions for each of us are; *“Am I listening to God and discerning His will for me each day?”*
Am I allowing God to lead me through each day?”

“Am I willingly doing the jobs God gives me to do?”

“Am I using the time, talents, and treasures God has entrusted me with to advance His Kingdom on earth?”

“Am I pleasing God by the way I live?”

That is what a living sacrifice means.

That is what a being totally committed to God means.

God loves us, provides for us, protects us, and God is present with us.

We should want to please God?

Jesus died for us so we could be with Him both now and throughout eternity.

We should we want to spend quality time Him every day?

God placed His Holy Spirit in us to teach us, to comfort us, and to give us the power over sin.

We should want to learn more about our Lord?

God gave His life for us and He expects us to respond to His unconditional sacrificial love?

Christianity is a personal relationship with Jesus.

Commitment is our response to God’s love for us and for all He has done for us.

Christianity without commitment is empty.

Commitment is certainly not popular today.

Our secular society has little commitment to our country, to any organization, to employers, to employees, or even to marriage.

A commitment to someone means you will do what you said regardless of the cost or consequences.

A commitment to your spouse means you will love, honor, support, and encourage your mate.

A commitment to your spouse means you will put them first in your life.

I use the example of marriage because Jesus refers to the church as His bride.

So a commitment to Jesus Christ means that we will love, honor, and obey Jesus regardless of the cost.

A commitment to Jesus means we will put our relationship with Jesus above everything else.

Jesus wants committed Christians who have passion and who are dedicated to advancing The Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

In our lesson from Revelation we saw two problems with the church at Laodicea.

First they judged themselves by the world's standards rather than God's standards.

They thought they were rich but they were spiritually bankrupt.

They thought they were righteous and they tried to cover up sin in their life, but they were morally naked in God's sight.

They thought they were discerning but God said they were spiritually blind.

The second problem in the church at Laodicea was they lacked commitment to Jesus Christ.

I love the way Eugene Peterson translates verse 15 in The Message.

"I know you inside and out and find little to my liking. You are not cold; you are not hot; far better to be either cold or hot. You are stale. You are stagnant. You make me want to vomit."

It was the people's lack of commitment in the church at Laodicea that made Jesus want to vomit.

So the question is, what is Jesus saying to each one of us about our commitment to Him this morning?

What is Jesus saying to Mt. Paran about our commitment to Him this morning?

Jesus told us plainly that lukewarm, casual Christians are useless to Him.

Jesus wants committed Christians who have passion and who are dedicated to advancing His Kingdom on earth.

Joshua challenged the children of Israel to be totally committed to God by reminding them of all God had done for them.

Then Joshua said, ***"Choose you this day whom you will serve but as for me and my house we will serve The Lord"*** (Joshua 24:15)

Daniel is another example for us since Daniel was totally committed to God.

Daniel did not falter even when he was faced with death.

We also read that God honored Daniel's commitment and miraculously rescued Daniel from the lions' den. (Daniel 6:22)

Proverbs 16:3 says, ***"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."***

Many Christians ask; “*why should I be totally committed to Jesus Christ?*”

Self-denial, bearing a cross, and total commitment are not motivating words until and unless you grasp the fact that Jesus did exactly that for you.

You see Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords chose to deny all of His own rights for you.

Jesus willingly suffered humiliation and died an excruciating death on a cross for you.

Jesus did all of that so you could be free from the power and the penalty of sin.

Jesus gladly paid the price of your sins because Jesus loves you and Jesus wants to have a close personal relationship with you both now and throughout eternity.

Commitment means making your relationship with Jesus your number one priority.

Commitment means having a sincere desire to study the Word of God.

Commitment means making God’s priorities your priorities.

Commitment means that Jesus is first and foremost in every aspect of your life.

Anything that comes between you and The Lord is a stumbling block in your spiritual life.

So what about you.

Will you respond to Jesus’ unconditional and sacrificial love for you by being a committed Christian?

- *Will you commit to having a closer personal relationship with Him?*
- *Will you commit to knowing Jesus’ will for your life?*
- *Will you commit to obeying all of Jesus’ commands?*
- *Will you commit to saying no to all sin in your life?*
- *Will you commit to furthering the peace and unity in our church?*
- *Will you commit to praying for the unsaved people God has put in your life?*
- *Will you commit to telling the people you know the difference Jesus makes in your life?*
- *Will you commit to doing your part to make Mt. Paran an effective witness in our community?*
- *Will you be totally committed to Jesus Christ?*

Just think of the difference we could make in our community if each of us were totally committed to Jesus Christ.

Remember Jesus came to earth to transform lives.

This morning Jesus is calling each one of us to make a commitment to make Jesus The Lord of our life.

Jesus invites each of us to walk by His side each day as His fully committed disciples.

The question is; are you willing to make that commitment to Jesus.

Being totally committed to Jesus is the only kind of life that will glorify God and the only way to have purpose and meaning in your life.

Being committed to Jesus is the only way to bring peace and joy to your soul.

Remember you only have one life to give and your life will pass soon.

Only what is done for Christ will last.”

Commitment is what Jesus is looking for in each of our lives.

Jesus wants all of us to have the desire to serve Him not just on Sunday morning but each and every day in all that we do and say.

You see if you limit to your commitment to Jesus you will never experience the joy of walking closely with The Lord.

If you limit to your commitment to Jesus you will never experience the abundant life that God planned for you.

If you limit to your commitment to Jesus you will never experience the power of The Holy Spirit working in your life. **AMEN**