

Easter—A Time for Commitment (Hebrews 10:10-24)



The approach of the Easter season is an ideal time for commitment to Christian causes or just to renew vows that you have forgotten or put on the back burner in our lives. The Resurrection of Christ signifies that we can start over and renew our commitment to Christ who gave his all for humanity on an old-rugged cross for our sins.

The definition for *commitment*, according to www.dictionary.com is “a pledge or promise; obligation.” A second source

www.merriam-webster.com lists the definition for *commitment* as “a promise (or pledge) to be loyal to someone or something.” Writer Steven P. Vitrano and professor emeritus of Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan writes that “Commitment can be defined as the decision to do what needs to be done, whatever the cost.”

There are several Greek words for *commitment*. The words include *proskartereó* (meaning “to be strong toward”), *parathēkē* (meaning “deposit” or “something entrusted to another’s care”), *pistis* (translated as “faith” encompassing “trustworthy commitment and fidelity”), *kollaó* (meaning “to glue,” “cleave,” or “join closely”), and *diathēkē* (meaning “covenant” or “testament”). Of all these Greek words, *parathēkē* is considered the best one to describe what it means to be committed or devoted as “the early believers’ devotion to prayer, teaching, and fellowship in Acts 2:42” (www.google.com)

Art Lindsley, Ph.D and Senior Fellow of the C.S. Lewis Institute writes that two other Greek words, *katecho* and *akline* are both symbolic of the characteristics that embody *commitment*. Lindsley writes that *katecho* means “to hold to, keep, detain, retain, contain, occupy, or possess.” *Akline* translated, according to Lindsley, means “without wavering (or in the NIV ‘unswerving’)”...or “not to bend or that which is straight.”

Lindsley denotes that love is the key ingredient for making a commitment to someone or something. He uses the scripture Hebrews 10:19-24 as evidence of this. Hebrews 10:19-24 reads:

¹⁹Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

²⁰By a new and “living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh:

²¹And having an high priest over the house of God;

²²Let us “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

²³Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

²⁴And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works;

Lindsley also states the “if we are going to grow in the love of Christ, we need to be committed to Him.” In other words, love is the passion that cannot be separated from the persons or things to which we commit. He writes that “commitment makes love sure and stable in a relational context” such as in a marriage or an important relationship with another.

Making a commitment to follow Christ is a covenantal relationship just as a marriage is to another person. Our commitment is a covenant which shows that we believe in a Savior that gave his life for the redemption of all mankind and we pledge our lives or activities to the work of Christ. We accept His willingness to love and adopt us into his kingdom unconditionally as a spouse or significant other would keep us close in love. Diego Boquer writes that “When we commit to doing only what others expect of us, we fulfill but do not excel, we please but do not satisfy, and we serve but do not love.” Christ is the epitome of love in action toward us.

Boquer lists 5 levels of commitment and their effect on the local church. The levels are explained in the chart below:

Level of Commitment	Explanation of the Levels of Commitment
Level 1: The Slacker	The slacker is not doing what he or she should be doing for the church. A slacker is mediocre and underperforms in comparison to themselves and not others. On this level, there is anger, frustration, a lack of enthusiasm, and very few invitations to your church service. The Kingdom of God suffers on this level. (Colossians 3:23, 24, NIV)
Level 2: The Responsible	This level shows the church member as responsible, reliable, trustworthy, dependent, and having a strong sense of duty to the organization. These members are on time for activities and complete their activities, but they fail to realize that God calls us to more than being responsible; he calls us to faithful, generous, and kind also. (Matthew 23:23, NKJV)
Level 3: The Generous	This level contains the core members of the church and is usually a small number of people. They have a mindset of excellence and go above and beyond what is asked of them to do. They love the Lord and are committed to Him. They may become tired and weary if they do not have the support of others in the congregation. (Ecclesiastes 9:10, NKJV)
Level 4: The Servant	The servant is harder to find in the congregation compared to the generous person. They possess level 2 and 3 qualities and are described as loving, inspirational, and are not looking for recognition, but the servant will appreciate being recognized when they receive it. They know they were saved to serve and do not get tired of serving the Kingdom of Christ. They do what they do with “joy, love, and excellence.” (Matthew 20:26, NKJV)
Level 5: The Martyr	The martyr is “the person who has paid a high price, perhaps even the ultimate one (death, torture, etc.), as a result of their commitment to Christ.” There are many Christians in the past who have suffered for their commitment and belief in Christ or their participation in Christian activities and events. Some of these negative consequences may cause the martyr to give up his or her new commitment or return to their previous lifestyle.

In the words of Spenser Smith from his song “The Cross Alone,” new life and change begin at the cross. We are saved by God’s Grace through our faith. Serving Christ becomes a lifestyle. Make the first step and commit to a new life in Christ. It is a decision you will never forget as you forge your way to a new path of change and more intentional daily living.

Resources

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