

Subject: A Serious Commitment to God's Word

Scripture: Psalm 119:33-40

Commitment is costly. It involves time and effort and planning and persistence. There is a big difference between involvement and commitment. Think of it like bacon and eggs. The hen that laid the eggs was involved in breakfast, but the hog that gave up the bacon was committed.

We all understand the concept of being committed to something or someone. Some things don't work at all unless there is commitment. Marriage is a good example of commitment. Getting an education is another example. When we congratulate someone on their graduation day, we celebrate years of commitment. One of the most important ingredients in our Christian life is commitment. We can't be a faithful believer without it. We must be committed to the church, to one another, and to the Word of God. That's what we see here, a person who is fully committed to God and His Word. We need to follow in his steps.

We must be teachable (vs. 33-34)

He prays for God to teach him and give him understanding. He has prayed like that before in this chapter (vs. 12, 18, 19, 26). He will pray like that many more times.

We must be obedient (vs. 33-34)

About one out of six verses in this chapter deal with obedience to God's Word. If you have a serious commitment to the Word, you will not only want to learn it, but you will do it. We need the double commitment of learning and doing. **James 1:22-25**²² *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*²³ *For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:*²⁴ *For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.*²⁵ *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

We must have a desire for the Word (vs. 35-37)

If we don't enjoy God's Word we won't be consistent in learning or obeying. This desire comes from the Lord. That's why the writer asks God to guide his way and incline his heart, not to covetousness. Many things in this world compete for our attention, but few things are worthy of our affection. I wonder how many commercials we hear or see in an average day. I've never seen an ad on TV encouraging me to read and study my Bible. We are told not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world. How does God cultivate our desire for His Word?

- We get a taste for the Word and keep coming back for more

Jeremiah 15:16 *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.*

Psalms 19:10-11¹⁰ *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*¹¹ *Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

- We see how worthless other things are in comparison to the Word

In his epic work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan had carefully chosen names for various characters and places. He called the world "Vanity Fair." It is fair to look on, but it empty and worthless. Just read what King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity." He tried a little bit of everything to save us the trouble. Why waste your time on other pursuits when you can spend time with God in His Word?

We must fear God (vs. 38)

The writer says he is devoted to fearing God. The Scriptures describe true believers as people who fear God. Job was a man who feared God and avoided evil. The lost world is described in ***Romans 3:18*** *There is no fear of God before their eyes.* On the other hand believers are described as God-fearing people: ***Malachi 3:16*** *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.* To fear God is to respect Him and trust Him. We must respect what God says in His Word.

As we read and study the Word we will fear Him even more. ***Psalms 19:7-9***⁷ *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*⁸ *The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*⁹ *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

We must confess our own weakness (vs. 39)

The writer dreads the reproach (disgrace) which he may cause if he doesn't live by the Word. God's Word is good because He is good. His Word is a reflection of God's character. Both God and His Word are good (vs. 68), true, unchanging, eternal, light, and holy. If we are really serious about God's Word we want to reflect it and not bring reproach (disgrace) upon it. Our life is the only Bible some people read, and we want it to represent Him well.

We must long to be like God (vs. 40)

This last verse in the section describes a desire to be godly. To ask God to quicken us in His righteousness means to make us alive to His holiness and His standards. This is the prayer of someone who is serious about his life and conduct. You hear a lot about the health, wealth, and success gospel, but you don't hear much about the holiness, righteousness, and godliness gospel. That is the very reason why God saves us: ***Titus 2:11-12***¹¹ *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*¹² *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* God gave us the Bible not just to inform us, but to transform us, first in salvation and then in Christian growth and godliness. Robert Murray McCheyne prayed: "Lord, make me as much like Jesus as a redeemed sinner can possibly be."

How serious is your commitment to God's Word? Are you really teachable? Do you put into practice what you know? Do you have a deep desire for it? Does the Bible cause you to fear God more? Does it concern you that your life needs to line up with the Bible and not bring disgrace on God? Do you long for God's Word to make you more like God?