



Commitment

Matthew 10:34-39

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

Continued from last edition...

Heb. 10:25 “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Commitment to worship should also include public worship with the church...the Lord’s Day worship at His table.



ILLUSTRATION - The young man poured out his heart’s devotion on paper as he wrote to the girl of his dreams: “Darling: I would climb the highest mountain, swim the widest stream, cross the burning desert, and die at the stake for you. P.S. I will see you on Saturday—if it doesn’t rain.” [*Ann Landers*, Los Angeles Times, February 1997]

That sounds like some people when it comes to going to church. If it rains or if there is any kind of bad weather, let’s just stay home. Or if there is something else we’d rather do, let’s go do the other thing. “I love you, Lord, but not that much.”

ILLUSTRATION - Billy Graham said, “Jesus spoke about the ox in the ditch on the Sabbath. But if your ox gets in the ditch every Sunday, you should either get rid of the ox or fill up the ditch.” [*Leadership*,

March 2003, pg. 87]

ILLUSTRATION - The story is told about President James A. Garfield’s first Sunday in Washington after his inauguration. A member of the cabinet insisted that a cabinet meeting be called at 10 a.m. the following day, which was Sunday, to handle a matter of grave importance.

President Garfield said that he had something to do at that time. The cabinet member insisted that the President break his previous engagement. GARFIELD REFUSED. The cabinet member said, “I would be interested to know with whom you could have an engagement so important that it cannot be broken.”

Garfield replied, “I will be as frank as you are. MY ENGAGEMENT IS WITH THE LORD TO MEET HIM AT HIS HOUSE AND AT HIS TABLE AT 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW AND I WILL BE THERE.” Garfield was there and the crisis passed and the nation survived. [*Washington Review*, September 1978, Pg.62]

And that’s the kind of commitment that we all should have when it comes to public worship of the Lord!

II. COMMITMENT TO WORK

ILLUSTRATION - The boss said to Jones, “How long have you been working here?” Jones replied, “EVER SINCE I

HEARD YOU COMING DOWN THE HALL." [Fresh Illustrations-Word Search, 2003] It's true that some people only work when the boss is around. Guess what? Our boss is ever-present.

Col. 3:22-24 "Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Brothers and sisters, regardless of the type of work we do in life we are serving the Lord. We are His. We are His representatives and not just in church. Consequently, He expects us to do our best work at work.

I tend to believe in the old philosophy: If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well. I don't like slipshod work, poor service, or have-baked bread. As representatives of Christ in this world we must do our best and give our best.

ILLUSTRATION- Dr. Ironside, when a boy, helped his widowed mother by working during vacations, Saturdays, and out-of-school days for a Scottish shoe worker who was a Christian. He posted Bible verses all over the shop so that everywhere one looked, he would see the Word of God. No package went out to a customer without a tract or a word of testimony, and many came back for salvation.

Dr. Ironside's job was to pound leather for shoe soles. A piece of cowhide was cut to size, soaked in water, and pounded until it was hard

and dry. After endless poundings, he was weary. One day, he noticed that another godless cobbler was not pounding, but was nailing the soles while still wet. He said, "So they come back quicker."

The Christian owner explained to Ironside: "I do not cobble just for 50¢ or 75¢ from customers. I do it for the glory of God. In heaven, I expect every shoe returned to me in a pile, and I do not want the Lord to say, 'Dan, that was a poor job. You did not do your best.' " WE NEED TO DO OUR BEST AT OUR WORK. [Fresh Illustrations-Word Search, 2003]

"I won't take my religion from any man who never works except with his mouth." - Carl Sandburg

"The reason why worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work." - Robert Frost

"There is no substitute for hard work." - Thomas Edison

ILLUSTRATION- It is said that each day across the USA 50,000 people quit their jobs. In a recent survey of workers across the USA, nearly 85% said that they could work harder at the job. More than half claimed they could double their effectiveness "if (they) wanted to." [Fox News Service, March 2006]

I believe that everybody ought to work and they ought to work harder than they do. And this also holds true when it comes to working for the Lord.

James 1:22 "But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only."

Rom. 12:11 "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."

I honestly don't think anyone works too much or too hard for the Lord, not even paid preachers.

ILLUSTRATION- C.T. Studd, the famous member of the English XI cricket team, gave away his vast wealth and became a missionary in India, China and Africa. His slogan was, "If Jesus Christ be God, and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." Studd was committed to the work of Christ. [Faith Library, 1967, Pg.1516]

CONCLUSION

ILLUSTRATION- An African preacher was overwhelmed by rebels who demanded that he renounce his faith. He refused. The night before they took his life, he wrote the following lines on a scrap of paper:

I am part of the "Fellowship of the Unashamed." I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I've stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of His. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is secure. I am finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions, mundane talking, chintzy giving, and dwarfed goals!

I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by presence, lead by faith, love by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by power.

My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is Heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions

few, my Guide reliable, my mission clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, diluted, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, shut up, let up, or burn up till I've preached up, prayed up, paid up, stored up, and stayed up for the cause of Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till all know, and work till He stops. And when He comes to get His own, He'll have no problems recognizing me. My colors will be clear.

How about you? [*History of the African Apostles*, Christian History Series, 1949, Pg.739]



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