

# Commitment

## Romans 12:1-2

### Introduction

Here's a question for us: To what are we totally committed? [PAUSE] It's an interesting exercise if we've never thought about this. Commitment is a virtue that is hard to come across these days. In our society we don't often whole-heartedly commit to anything, both in the secular world and in the Church. Most of us want to do what is convenient and finding people who are committed becomes increasingly difficult.

Our culture is one that doesn't see commitment as something of importance any more. Here are just a few statistics to back up my point:

- The divorce rate is climbing: 42% of all new marriages end in divorce
- Adults feel that they have fewer close friends than did adults in past decades
- Brand loyalty in consumer purchasing studies has dropped in most product categories, and by as much as 60% in some categories
- The proportion of people willing to join an organisation is declining in relation to churches, trade unions, political parties, clubs and community associations
- The percentage of people who commit to attend events but fail to show is on the rise
- In a lot of churches 20% of the people do 80% of the work and give 80% of the money

What does it mean to be committed?

- Dictionary definition: dedication to a cause/activity; a promise; an obligation
- Thesaurus: zeal, loyalty, vow, assurance, guarantee, covenant, obligation, duty, responsibility, tie

What does the Bible say. Let's take a look at [Romans 12:1-2](#) and see what Paul says. [Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform 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.](#)

Anytime we see the word 'therefore' in scripture, we should always go back and see what it's there for. Paul is referring to everything that he taught up to this point. In light of the teaching of justification (Jesus' righteousness credited to believers), sanctification (being made holy), and God's righteousness (without sin); there is now a call placed on the believers in Roman and our lives to live a life in response to all that God has done for us, to live out what we believe. There are four basic questions to consider as we look at these verses.

### What?

The first question is: what are we to do? Paul says that since God has done so much for us, we should present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God.

#### A living sacrifice

To sacrifice something is to give something up. It's to surrender. Being a living sacrifice has to do with daily surrender to the Lordship of Jesus. We're to die to ourselves and live for Jesus on a daily moment by moment basis, whatever the cost. Following Jesus, being a living sacrifice, requires a denial of self. In other words, as a follower of Jesus, we are no longer in charge. When we gave our life to Jesus, we relinquished control of our life. This is his day. This is his life. We have no right to do whatever we want to do. Everything we do must be for Jesus and his glory.

## A holy sacrifice

Not only are we to be a living sacrifice, but we're also to be a holy sacrifice. We know that Jesus was a holy sacrifice, willingly and obediently, laying down his life for you and me, taking upon himself the sins of the whole world and shedding his blood so that we may have life. Paul's call for us is to be holy just as God is holy. Now, we know that we can't be holy in our own efforts. It's through the power of God that we are made holy. The closer we are to Jesus, the more holy we become. The more we present ourselves as a living sacrifice, the more of a holy sacrifice we will be. Going our own way and doing our own thing will always lead to sin.

## A pleasing sacrifice

Paul also tells us that we are to be a pleasing sacrifice to God. When we think of our bodies, we think of those things that aren't pleasing to God. We have sinned with our bodies including our mouths, hands and feet. Our faces turn sour when we don't get our own wills. But now, our bodies are dedicated to another purpose and that's to do the will of God. The New American Commentary says, "Such sacrifices are "holy and pleasing to God." They are worthy of his acceptance. The possibility of bringing pleasure to God provides a powerful motivation for complete surrender of self."

## Why?

The next question to consider is, why should I present myself as a living sacrifice? Why should I surrender my whole life completely to Jesus? Paul says, [this is your true and proper worship](#). Some versions say this is your 'spiritual act of worship' or it is our 'reasonable service.' In other words, why wouldn't we be a living sacrifice? After all, it's the least we could do. When we think of all that Jesus has done for us, his total commitment to us, the obvious thing would be to surrender to a life of complete obedience and pleasing to God.

## How?

How do we actually and literally present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God? The answers are found in [verse 2, Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind](#). In order to be totally committed to Jesus, we mustn't conform ourselves to the world. Paul is referring here to the world system or to a secular world view. When we conform ourselves to the views and ways of the world, we can't possibly live a life that is totally committed to Jesus. A relationship with Jesus is everything that is opposite from the world. Our minds are naturally sinful. and we can't change ourselves. Only by making time in our lives for disciplined prayer and reading and meditating on God's word, are our minds transformed by the power of the Gospel. Our attitude will change, our vision will change, our goals will change, our talk will change, our walk will change; everything will change.

## So?

The final question to consider is simply, so? So what does all this mean? In the last part of [verse 2](#), we find that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, so that we may [approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will](#). In other words, it all goes back to the glory of God. The perfect will of God for all believers in Jesus is that we present our bodies as a living sacrifice. It's God's will that we live a life of total commitment to him. By living such a life, we approve God's will for us which brings him ultimate glory. We show the world the approved will of God by doing it, putting it on display to be the living proof that the will of God is good and lofty and noble.

HOWEVER, we mustn't fool ourselves, this isn't an easy task. As much as God wants us to be committed to him, Satan doesn't and will do whatever he can to throw obstacles in our way. Satan will try to convince us that we can leave one small area of our life unsurrendered to Jesus. DON'T fall for that lie. Jesus wants everything that we have to offer. Are we living such a life? Can we honestly say that we're totally committed? Does it show by the way we live?