

Jesus Seeks Commitment

by Paul Bramsen

Jesus demands commitment from his disciples, and this commitment is essential for forming God's Kingdom and overcoming the power of evil and sin.

Scripture: Matthew 10:37, Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23, John 12:25

Topics: "Following Jesus", "Christian Commitment"

Description

Paul Bramsen emphasizes the importance of commitment in following Jesus, drawing parallels between the Qur'an and the Bible in how Jesus called for unwavering dedication from His disciples. Jesus challenged His followers to prioritize Him above all else, even above their own lives, in order to be true helpers in the work of God. Despite the growing opposition and danger, Jesus' disciples remained committed, with most of them standing by Him through His arrest, trial, and crucifixion, showcasing their deep loyalty and faith.

Transcript

A leader needs people who are committed to him and his message; people who will not fall away if the going gets tough.

As we study the life of Jesus in the Qur'an, we discover that Jesus invited people to commit themselves to him and his message. You can read this for yourselves in Sura 3:52-53 and Sura 61:14.

Jesus asked the crowds a question:

"Who will be my helpers in doing the work of God?"

Those who had already committed themselves to him and his teaching did not hesitate to speak out even though they were surrounded by unbelievers.

"We are God's helpers," they said. "We believe in God. We believe in what you have revealed. Bear witness that we are Muslims. Count us among your faithful."

Those people who spoke up so promptly and bravely the Qur'an calls disciples, that is, students of Jesus. They were committed to Jesus.

Commitment is so important. Commitment is not automatic. Commitment is not a sudden emotional response of loyalty. Commitment grows as we experience greater and greater trust and as we grow in understanding God's commitment to us.

The Bible, my authority in matters of faith, mentions in detail how the disciples became Jesus' committed ones. Multitudes of people followed Jesus to listen to his powerful teaching and to see his great miracles. Many had come on their own volition. A few had been personally invited by Jesus. Those who followed by invitation had left their families, their homes and jobs in order to be with Jesus.

As Jesus' popularity grew, the political and religious authorities began to fear him. They knew he could easily organize his followers and start a rebellion against their authority. Spies were sent to watch Jesus and report his every activity.

In this delicate situation, it began to be dangerous to be too closely allied with Jesus. Although people still eagerly volunteered to join him, Jesus warned them that they had to be totally committed. Nothing must stand in their way. He must become more important to them than security, than family or property. He must be more important to them than their own life.

Jesus said,

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it." (Luke 9:23a-24)

It is amazing that people would still follow him under such circumstances. Of course, there were many who turned back as the situation became more and more difficult. But of the 12 men whom he personally invited and commissioned to be his apostles, 11 were with him when the authorities arrested him, two were nearby during his trial, and one saw every detail of his crucifixion and death. Several women were on the scene also, including his mother, Mary. After the resurrection, the eleven disciples and the women renewed their commitment to him.

But we have jumped way ahead of ourselves. We will discuss the Qur'anic treatment of Jesus' crucifixion, death and resurrection in later chapters. For now, it is enough to know that both the Qur'an and the Bible teach that Jesus demanded commitment from his disciples.

The power of evil and sin are so strong that only persons who commit everything are of use in forming God's Kingdom.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paul-bramsen/jesus-seeks-commitment/>

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