

Total Commitment!

To me, one of the most beautiful and meaningful passages is found when Paul stated:

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)

Maybe that this verse does not mean a lot to us today because we don't see this kind of commitment to Christ from Christians. Indeed this is sad. However, should we not be committed to the Lord in the same fashion? I believe we must. Let us examine this passage and then compare it to our own lives to see if we are as committed to Christ as Paul was.

We Must Die!

Paul first stated, "I have been crucified with Christ." I believe that Paul has reference to his own conversion. Paul taught the Romans, "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin." (Rom. 6:6). The act of baptism is what Paul was speaking! When we were baptized, we died to sin and thus figuratively "crucified" ourselves with Christ. As Christians, we cannot continue to live in the ways of sin (Rom. 6:1-2). We must live a life that the Lord and His will have dictated.

Therefore, the next logical step is to be raised to live with Christ.

Christians Must Surrender All!

"It is no longer I who live," Paul states. Here I believe we can see what kind of commitment Paul had made to live for the Lord. We must understand that if we want to live as Paul lived, we must realize that we must surrender our wills to the will of Christ. Yes, we are alive physically. Yes, we must still make proper choices and overcome temptation! However, we do these things by making the choice when we obeyed the gospel to allow Christ to live in us. We do this by allowing His word to dwell in us. In an interesting passage found in Galatians, Paul states that those who walk after the Spirit ". . . do not do the things that you wish" (Gal. 5:17). To be totally committed to Christ is allowing Him to guide us in our lives. Doing and living the way He lived, following the examples that He set (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21-22).

Justified by Faith

A committed life to Christ does not come by accident. It is a life that is purposefully lived. Paul explains, "I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." It will take great faith to live for our Lord. Paul had this faith in Christ to the extent that some accused him of being "beside ourselves" (1 Cor. 5:13). However, what these people did not understand is how one could love and have such a great faith in Christ (1 Cor. 5:14,15). When we fail, it is because of lack of faith (Heb. 3:12). We must be aware that we must sustain our faith in Christ.

This faith that we have will lead us to walk by faith. Paul stated in several passages as he would quote the prophet Habakkuk, ". . . But the just shall live by faith." (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38). "The faith" or the gospel of Christ produces this faith by which we walk. Christians must not reject the words of Christ (John 12:48). Christians must have a working faith (James 2:17-26). Children of God must "holdfast the pattern of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). Getting to heaven will depend on whether I live by faith in the Son of God. As Paul would later write to his beloved son in the faith, Paul would declare,

"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the

Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."
(2 Tim. 4:6-8)

Would it not be wonderful to be able to state these same words when it comes our time to die?

I believe Paul could state these words because of he was totally committed to God in his life. I also believe that if we would be totally committed to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we could declare the same thing. It will take commitment on our parts to go to heaven! Thus, I ask you, "how committed to the Lord are you?"

Randy Cavender