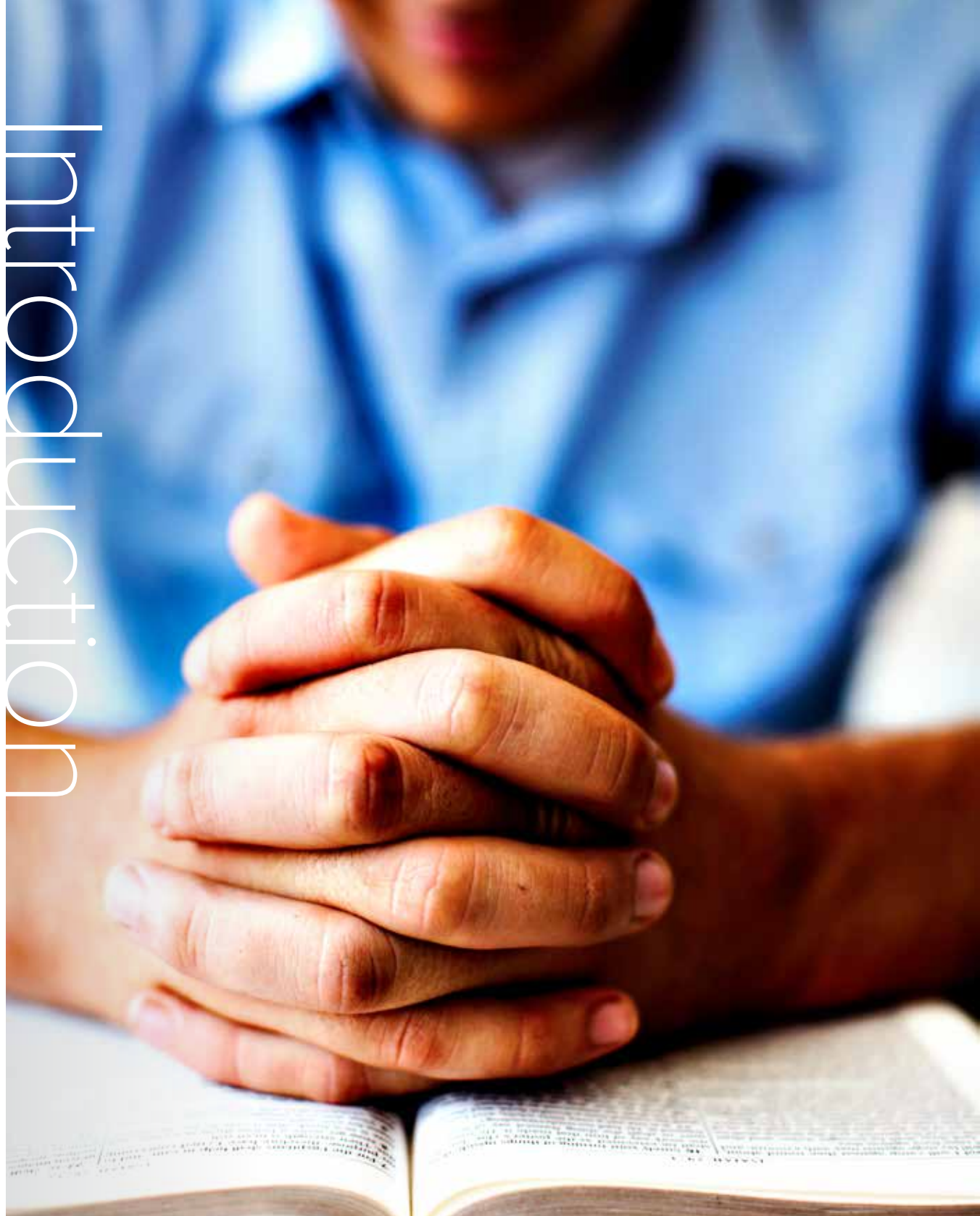


Introduction



ALL IN: A LIFE OF COMMITMENT

You're going to see one word come up over and over again in this study: commitment. Jesus spent three years fulfilling His earthly ministry, and during those three years He talked a lot about commitment. In fact, Jesus made it clear that commitment was a key part of being a follower of Christ. In the Gospels, we see many examples of people who followed Jesus because of what they hoped He could offer them, but they weren't truly committed to following Him, no matter what. And when Jesus encountered those folks He consistently challenged them to "count the cost" of following Him.

We're going to look at the call on the Christian life to be committed to Christ, His Word, the church, prayer, worship, and His mission. But one of the most beautiful things about what we'll learn is that God is committed to us first, before He calls us to an "all in" commitment. As you jump into this study, go ahead and "count the cost" of following Him. What you'll discover is that you can never make any greater or more fulfilling commitment than that of being fully committed to God and doing His work.

MATT CARTER

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How “All In: A Life of Commitment” supports the Discipleship Plan (see page 129):

Seek God. Seeking God is not something we do casually or only when we feel like it. A full commitment to Christ means we intentionally and continually seek after God and the things of God. As we deepen our walk and commitment to Christ, it only deepens our desire to seek Him, know Him, and please Him.

All In: A Life of Commitment

Session 1	Christ’s Commitment to Us Romans 5:6-12,18-21
Session 2	Our Commitment to Christ Mark 10:13-22
Session 3	Committed to His Word Psalm 119:1-11
Session 4	Committed to His Church Romans 12:3-16
Session 5	Committed to Pray Colossians 1:3-12
Session 6	Committed to His Worship Psalm 99:1-9
Session 7	Committed to His Mission Romans 10:9-17

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Christ's Commitment to Us



QUESTION 1:

What lessons about commitment were you taught growing up?

THE POINT

Even at our worst, Christ was fully committed to love us and bring us to God.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Commitment. Does that word make you nervous? Our culture is becoming increasingly averse to the idea of commitment. The bottom line is that we don't like commitment. To illustrate, we're ready to jump at the special pricing promoted by the cable provider, but then we cringe when we discover the rate comes with a year commitment.

More seriously, traditional marriage has been on a steady downward track for decades, but it's almost a free fall now. Among young adults, it's estimated that 25 percent of them will

never marry.¹ One reason is commitment. People would rather not make a life-long commitment that they're not sure they can actually fulfill.

Commitment is more palatable when we know the other person is absolutely committed to us and has our best in mind. That's what makes our relationship with God so special; He was committed to us before we were even committed to Him! And on top of that, even when our commitment to Him wavers, He never stops being committed to us. The greatest display of this is in our salvation.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

ROMANS 5:6-8

⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. ⁸ But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Gospel. The word means good news, and we find the best news we'll ever receive in the Bible. In the apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans, he gave the clearest explanation of the gospel. It's good news that, when we were helpless and hopeless in our sin, God didn't sit back with His arms folded, expecting us to get our act together before we could enter into a relationship with Him. He made the first move.

What was the first move? Jesus Christ, God's only Son, came to this earth to die to pay the price for our sins. That's the good news. Our relationship with God is not made right by our good works or our ability to obey all of the Ten Commandments. As a matter of fact, Scripture says that is impossible. We can't keep all of God's commandments, so God came and did it for us in the Person of

Jesus. He lived a perfect life and then died in our place on the cross of Calvary, paying the penalty of our sin for us.

And that brings us to an important question: Why? Why would God leave the comfort and glory of heaven to come to this planet just to die for us? The Scripture is clear: He loves us. Arguably the most famous verse in the Bible is John 3:16: "For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Love is the key.

QUESTION 2:

How did you come to recognize your need for Christ?

In Greek, the original language the writers used in the New Testament, the word for love has a deeper and more profound meaning than in our English language. The word for love used in Romans 5:8 is *agape*, which carries the idea of commitment or sacrifice. Agape conveys action. God's love for us was more than a feeling; it was a commitment to us He put into action by willingly dying for us. And He offered it to us even when we didn't deserve it. He made the first move and demonstrated His love for us when we couldn't demonstrate it to Him.

This "good news" is what separates Christianity from every other belief system.

Other Beliefs

If you are good, God will love you. If you get your act together, God will accept you.

Christianity

You weren't good, yet God loves you anyway, even to the point of dying for you.

You were helpless in your sin, but God helped you and accepts you anyway.

At the core of the gospel is a commitment. Yes, we are called to make a commitment to God, but that commitment must be understood in light of this reality: God was committed to us first. And His was an "all-in, forever, no matter what" kind of commitment.

ROMANS 5:9-11

⁹ How much more then, since we have now been declared righteous by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath. ¹⁰ For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.

The good news of the gospel is that, while we were still helpless in our sins, Christ came to this planet and died for us. Paul highlighted three things that happen to us because of the death of Christ on our behalf.



- 1. Declared righteous by Jesus' blood.** The word righteous means "right standing" or "right conduct." To understand the beauty of this, we have to first understand the nature of sin. God is perfectly holy, and because of His absolute holiness, He cannot be in the presence of sin. The bad news is that we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and none of us are righteous in and of ourselves. So when the day of our death comes and we stand in the presence of this perfectly holy God, the only hope we have of entering into His presence is if we have been made completely righteous in Christ.
- 2. Saved from God's wrath.** When Christ's blood makes us righteous, we are saved from the wrath of God. We don't like to think about God as wrathful, but when you get your mind around it, this actually helps us better understand His love for us. God hates sin, and since He is a righteous and just God, He must punish sin. Because of the blood of Christ, we never have to experience God's wrath, but only His love and acceptance.
- 3. Reconciled to God through Jesus' death.** Not only are we made righteous in God's sight and saved from His wrath, but we also are reconciled to God through the death of Christ. At the heart of the gospel, we see God reaching out to us to reconcile us to Himself. The greatest joy and contentment we can experience is not in money, friends, or cool experiences, but in a personal relationship with the One who created us. But sin keeps us from experiencing that relationship because our sin broke our relationship with God. Jesus' death reconciles us back into a relationship with Him. In other words, Jesus' death restored what was broken and allows us to live in fellowship with God, as we were meant to live. Christ's commitment to us didn't just make us better people; He has brought us back to who we were created to be.

QUESTION 3:

What causes you to rejoice now that you know Christ?



ROMANS 5:12,18-21

¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned.

¹⁸ So then, as through one trespass there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone. ¹⁹ For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ The law came along to multiply the trespass. But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more ²¹ so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness, resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

QUESTION 4:

What can we learn about the impact of sin from these verses?

Christ's commitment to us did not end when He made us righteous in the sight of God; Christ's death also means we get to be with God when we die. Because of Jesus' commitment to us, when we breathe our last breath, our souls will be instantly transported into the presence of our Lord and Savior, where we will live with Him forever in perfect peace and sinless bliss. Why is that the best news of all? As we see in verse 12, all humanity inherited Adam's sin nature. That means we are headed for hell if we don't receive this amazing gift of God's grace. But if we receive through faith the amazing gift Jesus provides through His death on the cross, God gives us eternal life. God didn't just want to save us from our sin, but He wanted to be with us forever. That's a pretty amazing commitment!

One question remains: have you received this righteousness-imputing, wrath-saving, reconciling, eternal life-giving love of God? Your action step in receiving this gift of amazing grace is simply to believe God! It's called faith. Pray right now to God and confess that you are a sinner who needs His forgiveness and you want to receive that forgiveness through the sacrifice that Jesus paid on the cross through the shedding of His blood. God loves you more than your wildest imagination, and He was fully committed to bring that love to you.

QUESTION 5:

What are some ways you've seen grace multiplied in our group?

HELP!

*Think of a time in your life when you felt helpless and had to depend on someone else to get you through. Briefly describe that situation in the space below.
Then answer the questions.*

How did it feel to rely on others to accomplish what you typically would do on your own?

How does this scenario compare or differ from our being helpless in sin and having to depend on Christ to save us?

If time allows, gather with one or two others in your group and share your thoughts with one another.

*“You are saved by grace through faith,
and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift.”*

EPHESIANS 2:8

