

Softball Devotion #2

This year's theme is the commitment line and so for Christians this means we are committed to Christ and what the Bible tells us. But what does it mean for Christians to commit themselves to Christ, and why would the Bible tell us to do so?

Being committed to Christ means 2 things: not living in sin and instead living in righteousness.

For Christians, being committed to Christ means not living in sin; so what is sin? It's a term that is often used but what does the bible have to say about it. Romans 3:23 tells us, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," To explain it simply, sin is the absence of God or in other words it's falling short of God's glory, which means we don't reach His expectations, and God's expectations are perfection and holiness. So every time we do something that's not perfect or not holy we are sinning and none of us can ever claim to be perfect; each of us are sinners because we always fall short of God's holiness and expectations. Now you may think that sin is to murder, or to have sex before marriage, or to steal, and you may be saying to yourself, "I've never done any of these things."

But here's what the bible tells us. In Matthew 5:21-22 it says, "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." Basically Jesus is saying that if you are angry with someone, then you have committed murder. For example, you are really angry with your friend for something they did and this anger is not a righteous anger but instead a selfish one. This will cause a broken relationship. If this anger towards your friend is unforgiveable then your friend has basically disappeared from your life and whether he/she was alive or dead does not matter to you because in your heart they are dead to you. Jesus here is warning us of this danger that we do not need to physically murder someone to commit murder in our hearts. Furthermore, Matthew 5:28 tells us, "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Jesus is saying here that every time someone lustfully looks at another person that is not their spouse or partner, then they have committed adultery because in their hearts, they have already lost a part of it to that object of lust. They have given what rightfully belongs to their spouse or partner and given it to this lust. So the next time you tell your spouse or partner that you love them you are in fact lying. By lusting, they are treating this person as an object and not giving him/her the dignity they deserve. There are many other examples in Matthew 5, but the point is that none of us are exempted, that all of us have sinned.

The bible tells us that sin is destructive and it separates us from God, which does bring out the worst in us. It is destructive because we are not living the way God wants us to live. What God wants for our lives is the very best for us. So when we live in ways apart from Him and apart from what He wants for us, it's not going to be good for us and

instead destructive. Sin always leads to brokenness. Sin always has short-term gain for long-term pain meaning that while it may appear good at the moment of sinning, the destruction and pain that results from sinning are inevitable.

So why are we called not to live in sin? The reason is because Jesus, the son of God, came to pay for those sins by dying on the cross. He was a perfect person that came to suffer and die on the cross so that we can no longer live destructive lives. In Matthew 1:21 it tells us, “She (meaning the virgin Mary) will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Secondly, we need to live lives of righteousness. Earlier I mentioned that to fall short of God’s glory means to fall short of his righteousness and holiness, so when we are called to live righteous lives we are called to live holy lives. 1 Peter 1:16 says, “for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”” So we are commanded to live holy lives and not live in sin. In Eph 2:10 it says, “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” So we are created to do good things. God had intended from the beginning to create us to do good things that He as the maker had prepared for us.

We are to live lives that are perfectly righteous and holy because this furthers shows the character of God, that He is perfect in all that He does, all that He says, and all that He thinks.

To wrap things up, to be committed to Christ means to not live in sin. Not only that but we are to live lives characterized by holiness. Jesus came to this world to enable us to do this. He is the only one who can save us from these destructive lives. He is the saviour that allows for our actions to be perfect before God’s eyes. As Christians, we need to live lives not in sin, but rather honouring and glorifying to God.

When we are committed to Christ, then His priorities become our priorities, and that means we are to no longer live in sin. Commitment means 100% and nothing less than that.

If you claim to be a Christian, are you living in sin or in righteousness? Are you 100% committed to Jesus?

If you don’t yet know Jesus as your saviour and Lord today, I hope that you will understand better what the Bible tells us about our sin, about what Jesus did for us on the cross so that we can live a righteous life. Consider today turning away from sin and following Jesus. Come and talk to me or any of the Christians on your team.