

## *The Cost and Benefits of Commitment*

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**Introduction:** Satan has an array of weapons he uses against the Christian.

- A. If he cannot defeat you from becoming a Christian, he will then try to cause you to compromise your faith! **(1 Pt 5:8-9)**
  - 1. He realizes that the most effective way to do this is “small”, gradual compromises that leave you weak and ineffective in the end.
  - 2. Through the history of God’s people, God has called men to stand distinctly from those of the world. **(1 Pt 2:9-10)**
- B. It is here where we must have a clear view of right and wrong. **(Rom 12:1-2)**
  - 1. There must be courage to seek knowledge with the full intention to apply whatever you learn.
  - 2. Here is where we come into conflict with other people and where the challenge to our faith will be the greatest! If we know the cost and value of our faith, then we will be strong. **(1 Pt 4:3-4)**

Strangely, the expounders of many of the great new ideas of history were frequently considered on the lunatic fringe for some or all of their lives. If one stands up and is counted, from time to time one may get knocked down. But remember this: a man flattened by an opponent can get up again. A man flattened by conformity stays down for good. -- Thomas J. Watson, Jr., Chairman of Board, IBM

### ***I. Four Bible Examples of a Commitment that Cost***

- A. The advise of Joseph to his family **(Gen 46:30-34)**
  - 1. God was with Joseph and no doubt gave the council of God here.
  - 2. Why did he tell the Egyptians in the beginning that they were shepherds?
  - 3. They would pay for this by having the Egyptians avoid them! Was this good or bad? God was in the process of building a nation.
  - 4. By the commitment of Joseph God was able to develop a people different from the Egyptians!
  - 5. When you are rejected socially for your faith, you are being blessed. **(Mt 5:11-12)**
- B. The example of Jesus **(Jn 6:60-68)**
  - 1. Why did Jesus let these people go away angry?
  - 2. There is a place where we can take away the “offense of the cross” and in the process pervert the gospel! **(Gal 5:11, 6:12)**
  - 3. How many are in fact ashamed of the gospel? **(Rom 1:16)**
- C. The example of Moses before Pharaoh **(Ex 10:24-27)**
  - 1. Was Moses being too hard and “stubborn” here?
  - 2. Some would say “take what you can and forget the rest” or “if you stand too strong you will get nothing and what good will that do?”
  - 3. There are many times where we will be faced with an “opportunity” to negotiate concerning that which God has said. Here is where we must refuse all compromise.

4. What did God give them in the end? Do we have the faith of Moses?  
(**Heb 11:24-26**)

D. The example of John the Baptist (**Mt 14:1-5**)

1. Look at what John's words cost him! He could no longer preach and he would eventually die.
2. Was it worth it? He had the praise of God! (**Mt 11:7-11**)

**II. Areas Where Commitment is Demanded**

A. **Honesty (Col 3:9-10)**

1. We need to have a conscience that will not tell a lie.
2. Why do men tell lies? When you fear men more than God, you will lose this battle.

B. **Modesty (1 Pt 2:9)**

1. Many of our parents are afraid to go against the fashions of the world.
2. Our children need to see at an early age the consistency of how a Christian dresses. Is there a different standard in a boat at a lake and in another public place?

C. **The control of our tongues (Jas 3:5-10)**

1. One of our greatest problems is when we are angry. (**Eph 4:26-27**)
2. We do not have to let anger be our master. (**Jas 1:19-20**)
3. We need to be principled in what we say about others. (**Rom 1:29-30**)

D. **In our homes (Eph 6:4)**

1. Who comes first on vacation? How do we give? Is there Bible devotional in our home?
2. It takes courage to turn off the TV and make time for what is really important.

**III. How to build a Strong Commitment**

A. Do not let your fear be you guide. (**Heb 13:5-6**)

1. Far too many people let their emotions over what might happen enslave them to a life of failure.
2. Fear is creative, it often brings you the very thing you fear. (Ex. A girl fearing that she will lose her boyfriend and thus compromises.)
3. Win the battle of the mind and replace fear with faith!

B. Learn to stand on the "small" things. (**Lk 19:17**)

1. Remember, what men calls little, God often calls big.
2. Here is where we build character. Conversely, small compromises destroy faith. Rarely does one fall away all at once.

C. Have heroes of faith. (**1 Cor 11:1; Phil 1:29-30**)

1. It is encouraging to see faith in action!
2. These examples tell us we can do what is right! Parents, who do you encourage to be with your children?

**Conclusion:** At the judgement day, you will not regret any sacrifice you made because of your faith.

A. God will give you His glory. (**Rom 8:18**)

B. Can we be like Moses and see this now?