Quality of Life Bible Study



Commitment©

compiled by
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COMMITMENT
"Quality of Life" Series

LEADER: What are you committed to?

Your work?
A relationship?
Your word?
A principle?
A mission?
The Lord?
What does it mean to be committed to something?

READER: Webster's

Commit: to bind, pledge, to commit oneself to an undertaking
Commitment: something which engages one to do something; a continuing obligation.

LEADER: "Top 10 Truths About Commitment" by Jan Gordon (Excerpt)
Source ~ http://www.qualitycoaching.com/Articles/commitment.html

The word commit comes from the Latin word committere, which means to connect, entrust.

When we stand behind our words, we demonstrate commitment. Commitment exists when our actions meet the expectation of our words - when there's a congruency between intent, words and action.

READER: QUOTE #1 Interest or Commitment?
Source ~ http://www.sermons.org/illustrations.html

"There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you are interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstances permit. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results." - Art Turock, , author, Getting Physical (Doubleday), Corporate speaker to business visionaries.

READER: QUOTE # 2
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans." - Peter F. Drucker professor of social science at Claremont Graduate School and the author of more than thirty books

READER: QUOTE #3
Source ~ http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_commitment.html

"You're not obligated to win. You're obligated to keep trying to do the best you can every day." - Marian Wright Edelman, first African American woman admitted to the Mississippi state bar; founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund

READER: QUOTE #4
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor." - Vince Lombardi 1913-1970 NFL's all time winningest coach (Green Bay Packers; Super Bowl Trophy named in his honor.

READER: "Heroism Demands Commitment"
Source ~ http://www.sermons.org/illustrations.html

"Three military recruiters showed up to address high school seniors. Each recruiter--representing the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps--was to have fifteen minutes.

The Army and Navy recruiters got carried away, so when it came time for the Marine to speak, he had just two minutes. He walked up and stood utterly silent for a full sixty seconds, half of his time.

Then he said this: "I doubt whether there are two or three of you in this room who could even cut it in the Marine Corps. But I want to see those two or three immediately in the dining hall when we are dismissed." He turned smartly and sat down.

When he arrived in the dining hall, those students interested in the Marines were a mob. The recruiter knew that commitment comes from appealing to the heroic dimension in every heart." - W. Frank Harrington 1935-1999 Pastor, Author, Protestant Hour radio program

READER: "Top Ten Truths About Commitment" LEADER (Call each number)
Source ~ http://www.qualitycoaching.com/Articles/commitment.html

1. Commitment is CONNECTION! Commitment is the connection between our values, intentions and our actions. Connection is the coming together of more than one element, while commitment is the giving of our selves to it, the surrender. The connections we make generate our commitments, just as our commitments generate more profound connections.

2. PASSION: the essence of commitment! Passion is that which deeply stirs us. It's the fire from within and that which motivates us. When passion is missing, our actions lack meaning and we don't get the results we want. Without passion, our actions are obligatory and lack velocity. Commitment emanates from passion -- passion is the seed from which commitment blossoms!

3. Commitment = PERSISTANCE. If one is committed, one's support is uncompromising and unending. One is willing to do anything in support of the commitment. This applies to love as much as it applies to professional or global commitments. Commitment drives us and anchors us during challenging times. Commitment helps us to maintain our integrity; we persist to that which we're committed.

4. Commitment is CONSCIOUS. Commitment requires insight and self-awareness -- one must know what one's values and ideals in order to commit to them! Do you know someone who's a conscientious and productive worker but who's not happy? Such a person frequently lacks insight and self-awareness - commitment is difficult if you don't know what's most important to you! Commitment requires an ability to observe self and make conscious decisions.

5. Commitment is PURPOSEFUL. Commitment involves choice - saying yes to our values and to our passions! Commitment is never haphazard or random. While we may lose our perspective from time to time, commitment always involves choice and intent. Commitment enables us to be purposeful.

6. Commitment is SELF-EXPRESSION. Self-expression is the culmination of who we are and how we're being. When there's perfect alignment and congruency between who we are and how we're being, we are authentic and fully self-expressed. This is wonderfully fulfilling! If commitment is the ultimate expression of our values and who we are, self-expression is a core ingredient of commitment.

7. VISION brings forth our commitment. Does commitment generate the envisioning process, or does vision generate commitment? Either way, commitment and vision are inexplicably tied together. Expand your vision while you deepen your commitment in order to produce powerful results!

8. Commitment INSPIRES us to be and do our BEST. We aim for the sky and shoot for the stars! We refuse to accept less than the best from our selves and others. Our commitment inspires us to reach for quality and excellence. We continually enlarge and clarify our vision - this contributes to us living our personal best.

9. Commitment lives in COMMUNICATION. Communication involves verbal and nonverbal interaction. While commitment lives in the declaration and words, evidence of commitment lives in the actions we take and don't take. Be attentive for evidence of commitment in communication.

10. Commitment is SURRENDER. Commitment is the giving of our selves to what we most believe and want. It is the merging of our ideals and our being. We surrender to our ideals and with commitment, live them. We create what we want when we surrender to our commitment.

READER: QUOTE # 5 Prepared for Every Eventuality Bits & Pieces
Source ~ http://www.bible.org/illus/c/c-90.htm#TopOfPage

"To give yourself the best possible chance of playing to your potential, you must prepare for every eventuality. That means practice. Now I know that very often you "just don't have the time." In spite of that, if you really want to improve, you will have to make the decision, and then the commitment. There are no shortcuts. You must lay the proper foundation." – Seve Ballesteros, Spanish golfer

LEADER: AND WHAT ABOUT WHEN THINGS GET ROUGH…

ARE YOU STILL COMMITTED?

READER: Deuteronomy 31:8

"The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

READER: "Against the Odds" (Leader Call Out Letters) Heaven Bound Living, Knofel Stanton, Standard
Source ~ http://www.bible.org/illus/c/c-90.htm#TopOfPage

A. Johnny Fulton was run over by a car at the age of three. He suffered crushed hips, broken ribs, a fractured skull, and compound fractures in his legs. It did not look as if he would live. But he would not give up. In fact, he later ran the half-mile in less than two minutes.

B. Walt Davis was totally paralyzed by polio when he was nine years old, but he did not give up. He became the Olympic high jump champion in 1952.

C. Shelly Mann was paralyzed by polio when she was five years old, but she would not give up. She eventually claimed eight different swimming records for the U.S. and won a gold medal at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne, Australia.

D. In 1938, Karoly Takacs, a member of Hungary's world-champion pistol shooting team and sergeant in the army, lost his right hand when a grenade he was holding exploded. But Takacs did not give. up. He learned to shoot left-handed and won gold medals in the 1948 and 1952 Olympics.

E. Lou Gehrig was such a clumsy ball player that the boys in his neighborhood would not let him play on their team. But he was committed. He did not give up. Eventually, his name was entered into baseball's Hall of Fame.

F. Woodrow Wilson could not read until he was ten years old. But he was a committed person. He became the twenty-eighth President of the United States.

G. At the age of seven, he had to go to work to help support his family. At nine, his mother died. At twenty-two, he lost his job as a store clerk. At twenty-three, he went into debt and became a partner in a small store. At twenty-six, his partner died leaving him a huge debt. By the age of thirty-five, he had been defeated twice when running for a seat in Congress. At the age of thirty-seven, he won the election. At thirty-nine, he lost his reelection bid. At forty-one, his four-year-old son died. At forty-two, he was rejected for a land officer role. At forty-five, he ran for the Senate and lost. At forty-seven, he was defeated for the nomination for Vice President. At forty-nine, he ran for Senate again and lost again. At the age of fifty-one, he was elected President of the United States. During his second term of office, he was assassinated. But his name lives on among the greats in U.S. history—Abraham Lincoln.

READER: QUOTE # 6
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"Competing in sports has taught me that if I'm not willing to give 120 percent, somebody else will." - Ron Blomberg New York Yankee 1969-1976, White Sox 1978, Baseball Hall of Fame – First DH in major league baseball

READER: QUOTE #7
Source ~ http://www.christianglobe.com/Illustrations/theDetails.asp?whichOne=d&whichFile=dedication

Former pro basketball star Bill Bradley tells that at the age of 15 he attended a summer basketball camp that was run by Easy Ed Macauley, a former college and pro star. "Just remember that if you're not working at your game to the utmost of your ability," Macauley told his assembled campers, "there will be someone out there somewhere with equal ability who will be working to the utmost of his ability. And one day you'll play each other, and he'll have the advantage." - Our Daily Bread

READER: QUOTE #8
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"The achievement of your goal is assured the moment you commit yourself to it." - Mack R. Douglas - author of fifteen books, including How to Make a Habit of Succeeding. President of Discovery Seminars International, with offices in the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Egypt. Conducts seminars for, and training groups like General Motors, Boy Scouts of America, and Prudential Insurance, etc.

READER: Dedication #1
Source ~ http://www.christianglobe.com/Illustrations/theDetails.asp?whichOne=d&whichFile=dedication

Plato wrote the first sentence of his famous Republic nine different ways before he was satisfied. Cicero practiced speaking before friends every day for thirty years to perfect his elocution. Noah Webster labored 36 years writing his dictionary, crossing the Atlantic twice to gather material. Milton rose at 4:00 am every day in order to have enough hours for his Paradise Lost. Gibbon spent 26 years on his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Bryant rewrote one of his poetic masterpieces 99 times before publication, and it became a classic. - Source Unknown.

READER: Dedication #2 Today in the Word
Source ~ http://www.christianglobe.com/Illustrations/theDetails.asp?whichOne=d&whichFile=dedication

Persistence paid off for American astronomer Clyde Tombaugh, who discovered the planet Pluto. After astronomers calculated a probable orbit for this "suspected" heavenly body, Tombaugh took up the search in March 1929. Time magazine recorded the investigation: "He examined scores of telescopic photographs each showing tens of thousands of star images in pairs under the dual microscope. It often took three days to scan a single pair. It was exhausting, eye-cracking work--in his own words, 'brutal, tediousness.' And it went on for months. Star by star, he examined 20 million images. Then on February 18, 1930, as he was blinking at a pair of photographs in the constellation Gemini, 'I suddenly came upon the image of Pluto!" It was the most dramatic astronomic discovery in nearly 100 years.

READER: QUOTE #9
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"All great masters are chiefly distinguished by the power of adding a second, a third, and perhaps a fourth step in a continuous line. Many a man had taken the first step. With every additional step you enhance immensely the value of your first." - Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882 American Poet

READER: QUOTE #10
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"You can do what you want to do, accomplish what you want to accomplish, attain any reasonable objective you may have in mind -- not all of a sudden, perhaps not in one swift and sweeping act of achievement -- but you can do it gradually, day by day and play by play, if you want to do it, if you work to do it, over a sufficiently long period of time." - William E. Holler 1864-1898

READER: "Take the Plunge" From Steve Goodier's "One Minute Can Change a Life"
Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon3b/take_the_plunge.htm

"Watch me dive off the high board, Dad," my then ten-year-old son called out. I looked up to the ten-foot-high diving board and waited as he stood at the edge, stooped over, arms extended. He had jumped off the high board many times before, but now his nerve seemed to falter as he contemplated streaking through the air headfirst.

The swimming pool was vacated, so he could take his time. "You can do it, Robby," I encouraged. But he couldn't. Not that evening. For 20 minutes he attempted to muster the courage to make the plunge, and he finally gave up when the pool closed for the night.

"I feel disappointed in myself," Robby said on the way home. "I feel terrible. I know I can do it, though. I know I can."

He persuaded me to take him swimming again the next evening. Like the night before, we happened to be the only swimmers. "I'm going to do it this time," he said emphatically. "Watch me!""

He climbed the ladder and walked to the end of the board as I watched. Again I encouraged him. Again he hesitated. As the previous night, his nerve failed. It seemed that he would never conquer his fear and leap.

The lifeguards on duty helped me cheer him on. "You can do it, Robby," we all exhorted. "Just do it! Don't think about it. Just do it!"

For 30 minutes we encouraged him. For 30 minutes he started and stopped, he leaned and straightened and fought the fear that held him back.

And then it happened. He extended his arms, bent over the edge and fell headfirst into the water! He emerged to the sounds of laughter and congratulations. He did it! He finally did it! And before he went home, he did it three more times.

Robby learned something about facing his fear that evening. But he learned something else, too. He learned that some things can't be done with less than full commitment. A chasm cannot be leaped in two small jumps and a dive cannot be made a little at a time. Sometimes you just have to do it.

Some things require no less than full commitment. What is requiring your full commitment? Will you take the plunge?

READER: QUOTE # 11
Source ~ http://www.bible.org/illus/c/c-90.htm#TopOfPage Guideposts

"When I was a boy, my father, a baker, introduced me to the wonders of song," tenor Luciano Pavarotti relates. "He urged me to work very hard to develop my voice. Arrigo Pola, a professional tenor in my hometown of Modena, Italy, took me as a pupil. I also enrolled in a teachers college. On graduating, I asked my father, 'Shall I be a teacher or a singer?'

"'Luciano,' my father replied, 'if you try to sit on two chairs, you will fall between them. For life, you must choose one chair.'

"I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it's laying bricks, writing a book—whatever we choose—we should give ourselves to it. Commitment, that's the key. Choose one chair." - Luciano Pavarotti, Famous Italian Tenor

READER: "Awareness Insights" (Excerpt) (LEADER READ BOLD – wait for answer)
Source ~ http://www.higherawareness.com/onepagers.shtml

- **Life Tracker** - Stay on top of what is most important to you.
- **Insight Tracker** - Track insights and events. Bring more meaning to your life.
- **Consciousness** - Track your growth. Identify your next growth step.
- **Blocks** - What are your challenges and life lessons?
- **Block Buster** - Take the first step to break through life challenges.
- **Manifesting** – Plan 9 steps to creating what you desire.
- **Decision Making** - Learn how to make effective, informed choices.
- **Dream Day** - Idealize your perfect day, week, month, year so you can begin to live them.
- **Time** - Reflect on how well you are using the time of your life.
- **Motivation** - Tap into and maintain your natural power and passion.
- **Past** - Create a visual, revealing snapshot of your past.
- **Personal Pathway** - Where are you on your life paths?
- **Business Plan** - Work ON your business, instead of IN your business.
- **Commitment Process** - Clarity builds willpower.
- **Life Purpose** - Clarify your direction and destiny in life.

READER: Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

READER: "Pope Pius the Ninth" Thanks to Pastor Ron Clarke ron@pastornet.net.au
Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2c/pope_pius_the_ninth.htm

Pope Pius the Ninth once received a letter very different from the many he received every day. It was written on a plain sheet of paper; there were ink spots on it, crossed out words, and spelling mistakes. A very young boy living in a suburb of Rome had sent it. The boy's mother was ill; he had no money to help her and he asked the Pope for the thirty-seven lire he wanted for medicine. Pius had his secretary reply to the boy, saying that he would receive him at the palace the next morning.

On the following day the now happy boy went to the Vatican, presented his letter of audience, and asked that he be taken to see the Pope. The guards were very surprised, looked at the letter and passed it on to an officer to check, and finally let the boy into the palace. The boy's honest and determined look immediately appealed to the Pope, who after a little talk, gave him a gold coin. The boy thanked him then innocently mentioned that it was only twenty-five lire he had received and he wanted thirty-seven.

“Of course,’ answered the Pope, “you are right, I had forgotten the exact amount you needed.” Then he took a second coin from his purse and gave it to the boy. But this is too much now,” the boy pointed out, “and I have no change. But I will bring it tomorrow.” “That’s all right; come and see me again tomorrow,” replied the Pope.

The boy was very prompt and arrived next morning with the change. This greatly impressed the Pope. In the meantime he had his secretary make some enquiries about the boy and his sick mother. The secretary had reported to the Pope that the boy was truthful and conscientious and that the family was very poor. So when the boy arrived with the change the Pope told him that he would pay for his education and that his mother would be properly cared for during her illness.

And so it was done. The boy received a good education and became very successful in all that he did, worthy of the Pope who had helped him.

This story is about honesty, not about big things but small things, not asking for too much, only what is necessary. It’s also a story about making a commitment and honouring it. Today, the media abounds with stories of confidence tricksters, about misrepresentation, about dishonesty. Society now expects that we should question every offer of help or kindness in case there is a ‘bottom line’ and we become a victim.

One morning 2,000 years ago God made us a great offer. He placed on earth His Son who would live and work among His people. Jesus would not ask too much of us, only that we should honor His name and go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything He commanded us. And He made a commitment that He would be with us always, to the very end of the age. It is a commitment that He will honour.

The dishonesty of many has caused us to become sceptics. But there is no dishonesty about God - He gave His Son to us as a gift, He made an offer of forgiveness and He made a promise of eternal life to those who believe. No matter how society behaves, this is honesty and commitment that we can rely on.

LEADER READ: “The Mission” “I believe in you!” Bob Perks Bob@BobPerks.com Copyright (c)
Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/mission.htm

“I’m on a mission!” he told me.

“What is this mission?” I asked.

“To find what my purpose is in life,” he replied.

“Have you been on this mission long?”

“I’m 56. I’ve been in search of it all of my life,” he said.

“How sad!” I told him.

He was shocked to hear that from me. He stood speechless and confused. He knows I love to hear stories about people on a mission. I have a great admiration for those living life on purpose.

“Why would you say that?”

“My friend, you have spent a lifetime in search of your purpose. Obviously you believe you have not yet found it.”

“No, I haven’t.”

“Then you have wasted your life!” I told him.

He abruptly sat down.

“Why would you think that?”

“You have spent a lifetime in search of what you already had. In an effort to discover some glorious mission, some grand plan for your life, you have missed it entirely, “ I told him.

“What have I missed?”

“You!” I said emphatically. “God created each of us so uniquely, so precisely, that we are truly one of a kind. Genetically there is no one else like you. To make us even more unique, our personalities differ because of our life experiences. The people and places, the pains and powers of our lives make each of us unique.”

“So what is my purpose?”

“Your purpose is to take each day granted you and apply everything you are to it. To blend into that 24 hours your uniqueness, your spirit, your personality, your genetic exclusivity, your unequaled, unmatched, even unprecedented and exceptional self, is in fact fulfilling the very mission God has assigned to you. Being fully you completes His plan for the world that day.”

He sat quietly thinking about what I had told him. Then, rising suddenly, he turned to me and said, “Then I have a lot to do today, don’t I?”

So do you!

READER: QUOTE # 12
Source ~ http://www.bible.org/illus/c/c-90.htm#TopOfPage

“Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions. And the actions which speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none. Coming through time after time, year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.” - Source unknown

READER: “INCREDIBLE JOURNEY” (Excerpt) TODAY IN THE WORD
Source ~ http://www.moody.edu/st/tiw/tdw/devotional.cfm?dy=09&mn=01&yr=2004

Be strong and courageous . . . for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. - Joshua 1:9

Thomas and Tina Sjogren of New York City recently completed an incredible journey.

In May 2002, they skied and swam their way without any outside help (such as sled dogs or food airdrops) to 90-1/4 N latitude–the North Pole. Earlier they had successfully reached the South Pole and climbed Mount Everest, sometimes called “the third pole.” Only three people before them had managed to go to all three poles, and Tina is the first woman ever to accomplish the feat.

An incredible journey, a seemingly impossible goal. These words also describe the Israelites at the end of the Exodus, as they stood poised to enter the Promised Land. The legendary Moses had died, and Joshua was trying to fill his big shoes as the head of a restless and wandering nation. He may have been tempted to fear or feel discouragement, despite his special anointing for the task at hand and the fact that he was *“filled with the spirit of wisdom”* (Deuternomy. 34:9).

In this difficult situation, God made Joshua several promises and gave him several commands. He renewed the promise of conquering and inheriting the land, and specifically promised him victory in battle. Most significantly, He guaranteed His constant presence: *“I will never leave you nor forsake you . . . the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go”* (Joshua 1: 5, 9). The Lord also told Joshua to be strong and courageous, and repeated this several times for emphasis. He reminded him to meditate on and obey carefully His Law. In summary, Joshua could meet the challenge if He trusted the person, presence, power, and Word of God.

Joshua wisely responded with complete faith: Let’s go claim the land! He was confident because it depended on the Lord, not him (Joshua 1:10-11). As God’s chosen leader, he understood that he must lead with strength and courage flowing from obedient submission, with confidence based upon the surety of God’s promises, and with humility that properly credits God with the victory and gives Him the glory.

READER: QUOTE #13
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin

it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now." - Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe 1749-1832 German poet, novelist, playwright, courtier, and natural philosopher, one of the greatest figures in Western literature

READER: Proverbs 16:3

"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

READER: QUOTE #14
Source ~ http://www.christianglobe.com/Illustrations/theDetails.asp?whichOne=d&whichFile=dedication

"It does not take great men to do great things; it only takes consecrated men." - Philipps Brooks, author of the Christmas carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem

LEADER READ: Consecration
Source ~ http://www.bible.org/illus/c/c-90.htm#TopOfPage

"Will you please tell me in a word," said a Christian woman to a minister, "what your idea of consecration is?"

Holding out a blank sheet of paper the pastor replied, "It is to sign your name at the bottom of this blank sheet, and to let God fill it in as He will." - Source unknown

READER: 1 Kings 8:54-61 Solomon's Benediction

When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven.

And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying:

"Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.

"May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers.

"And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else.

" Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day."

READER: QUOTE #15
Source ~ http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_commitment.html

"It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do, no matter how hard it is, than to face the responsibilities of not doing it." - J. R. Miller - author

LEADER: It's Time! By Tom Norvell…A Norvell Note.
Source ~ http://www.heartlight.org/articles/200110/20011013_itstime.html

It's time we started taking the time to take advantage of the opportunities that God sends our way to speak up, stand up, lift up, and cheer up.

It's time we stopped doing some things and started doing other things, better things, more productive things, and more spiritual things.

It's time we finished one project and started another project.

It's time we fulfilled the commitments we have made, and make other commitments which we will fulfill.

It's time to show God and all who know us that we are people of the Word, and people who keep our word. It's time!

Don't wait! It's time!

READER: "Our Way and God's Way" Our Daily Bread
Source ~ http://www.gospelcom.net/rbc/odb/odb-05-23-94.shtml (Excerpt)

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. – Psalm 127:1

Our way is the path of human wisdom and self-reliance. It leads to frustration and emptiness. God's way involves trusting Him, obeying Him, and depending on Him. It leads to satisfaction and joy--in part on earth but fully in heaven. Each day let's choose to live God's way. --HVL

Life is wasted, useless, and of no avail
Unless we're living daily for the Lord;
Let's pledge ourselves anew to living godly,
Anything less we simply can't afford. -- Adams

God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him.

LEADER: God's Cover Letter Wit & Wisdom (Excerpt)
Source ~ http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon1/god's1.htm

To: Whom It May Concern . . .

I heard you were considering a new manager in your life. I would like to apply for the job. I believe I am the most qualified candidate. I am the only one that has even done this job successfully. I was the first manager of human beings. In fact I made them, so naturally I know how humanity works, and what is best to get people back into proper working condition. It will be like having the manufacturer as your personal mechanic.

If this is your first time considering me, I would just like to point out that my salary has already been paid by the blood of my son, Jesus on the cross of Calvary. What I need from you is the acknowledgment that the price is sufficient to pay for all of your sin and your independence from Me. I need you to believe this in your heart and to tell somebody else about your decision with your mouth.

The next thing I ask for, is the right to change and fix your life so you can learn how to stay close to Me. I will make some major changes and revisions. They are not for you to worry about. I need your permission to execute these changes, in My way and in My time. I will change your desires and give you the strength to make the changes.

Please keep your hands out of the way. Don't try to help me and Don't resist me. I really do need your full commitment and cooperation. If you give me those, the process can go smoothly, without delays.

Yours Sincerely,

GOD

P.S. I created the heavens and the earth. I AM.

SALARY REQUIREMENT

"Work in your life has already been paid for through the blood of My Son, Jesus. Your only responsibility is to commit initially and on a daily basis. To trust and obey what Jesus has done and wants to do in your life" - Author unknown

LEADER: Bobby Richardson
Source ~ http://www.christianglobe.com/Illustrations/theDetails.asp?whichOne=d&whichFile=dedication

At a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Bobby Richardson, former New York Yankee second baseman, offered a prayer that is a classic in brevity and poignancy: "Dear God, Your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. Amen."

LEADER: THIS COULD BE OUR COMMITMENT TODAY.

WE CAN COMMIT THAT WHATEVER WE DO, WHATEVER WE SPEND OUR TIME AND ENERGY ON WILL BE IN HIS WILL AND GLORIFY HIM.

"Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." - Acts 20:32

COMMENTS IF TIME:

ALLOW TIME BEFORE CLOSING FOR PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES:

COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR YOUR READERS

READERS

Webster's

Commit: to bind, pledge, to commit oneself to an undertaking
Commitment: something which engages one to do something; a continuing obligation.

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QUOTE #1 Interest or Commitment?

"There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you are interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstances permit. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results." - Art Turock, , author, Getting Physical (Doubleday), Corporate speaker to business visionaries.

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QUOTE # 2

"Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans." - Peter F. Drucker professor of social science at Claremont Graduate School and the author of more than thirty books

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QUOTE #3

"You're not obligated to win. You're obligated to keep trying to do the best you can every day." - Marian Wright Edelman, first African American woman admitted to the Mississippi state bar; founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund

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QUOTE #4

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor." - Vince Lombardi 1913-1970 NFL's all time winningest coach (Green Bay Packers; Super Bowl Trophy named in his honor.

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"Heroism Demands Commitment"

"Three military recruiters showed up to address high school seniors. Each recruiter--representing the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps--was to have fifteen minutes.

The Army and Navy recruiters got carried away, so when it came time for the Marine to speak, he had just two minutes. He walked up and stood utterly silent for a full sixty seconds, half of his time.

Then he said this: "I doubt whether there are two or three of you in this room who could even cut it in the Marine Corps. But I want to see those two or three immediately in the dining hall when we are dismissed." He turned smartly and sat down.

When he arrived in the dining hall, those students interested in the Marines were a mob. The recruiter knew that commitment comes from appealing to the heroic dimension in every heart." - W. Frank Harrington 1935-1999 Pastor, Author, Protestant Hour radio program

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"Top Ten Truths About Commitment" LEADER Calls each number

1. Commitment is CONNECTION! Commitment is the connection between our values, intentions and our actions. Connection is the coming together of more than one element, while commitment is the giving of our selves to it, the surrender. The connections we make generate our commitments, just as our commitments generate more profound connections.

2. PASSION: the essence of commitment! Passion is that which deeply stirs us. It's the fire from within and that which motivates us. When passion is missing, our actions lack meaning and we don't get the results we want. Without passion, our actions are obligatory and lack velocity. Commitment emanates from passion -- passion is the seed from which commitment blossoms!

3. Commitment = PERSISTANCE. If one is committed, one's support is uncompromising and unending. One is willing to do anything in support of the commitment. This applies to love as much as it applies to professional or global commitments. Commitment drives us and anchors us during challenging times. Commitment helps us to maintain our integrity; we persist to that which we're committed.

4. Commitment is CONSCIOUS. Commitment requires insight and self-awareness -- one must know what one's values and ideals in order to commit to them! Do you know someone who's a conscientious and productive worker but who's not happy? Such a person frequently lacks insight and self-awareness - commitment is difficult if you don't know what's most important to you! Commitment requires an ability to observe self and make conscious decisions.

5. Commitment is PURPOSEFUL. Commitment involves choice - saying yes to our values and to our passions! Commitment is never haphazard or random. While we may lose our perspective from time to time, commitment always involves choice and intent. Commitment enables us to be purposeful.

6. Commitment is SELF-EXPRESSION. Self-expression is the culmination of who we are and how we're being. When there's perfect alignment and congruency between who we are and how we're being, we are authentic and fully self-expressed. This is wonderfully fulfilling! If commitment is the ultimate expression of our values and who we are, self-expression is a core ingredient of commitment.

7. VISION brings forth our commitment. Does commitment generate the envisioning process, or does vision generate commitment? Either way, commitment and vision are inexplicably tied together. Expand your vision while you deepen your commitment in order to produce powerful results!

8. Commitment INSPIRES us to be and do our BEST. We aim for the sky and shoot for the stars! We refuse to accept less than the best from our selves and others. Our commitment inspires us to reach for quality and excellence. We continually enlarge and clarify our vision - this contributes to us living our personal best.

9. Commitment lives in COMMUNICATION. Communication involves verbal and nonverbal interaction. While commitment lives in the declaration and words, evidence of commitment lives in the actions we take and don't take. Be attentive for evidence of commitment in communication.

10. Commitment is SURRENDER. Commitment is the giving of our selves to what we most believe and want. It is the merging of our ideals and our being. We surrender to our ideals and with commitment, live them. We create what we want when we surrender to our commitment.

QUOTE # 5 Prepared for Every Eventuality

"To give yourself the best possible chance of playing to your potential, you must prepare for every eventuality. That means practice. Now I know that very often you "just don't have the time." In spite of that, if you really want to improve, you will have to make the decision, and then the commitment. There are no shortcuts. You must lay the proper foundation." – Seve Ballesteros, Spanish golfer

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Deuteronomy 31:8

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"Against the Odds" (Leader Calls Out Letters)

A. Johnny Fulton was run over by a car at the age of three. He suffered crushed hips, broken ribs, a fractured skull, and compound fractures in his legs. It did not look as if he would live. But he would not give up. In fact, he later ran the half-mile in less than two minutes.

B. Walt Davis was totally paralyzed by polio when he was nine years old, but he did not give up. He became the Olympic high jump champion in 1952.

C. Shelly Mann was paralyzed by polio when she was five years old, but she would not give up. She eventually claimed eight different swimming records for the U.S. and won a gold medal at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne, Australia.

D. In 1938, Karoly Takacs, a member of Hungary's world-champion pistol shooting team and sergeant in the army, lost his right hand when a grenade he was holding exploded. But Takacs did not give. up. He learned to shoot left-handed and won gold medals in the 1948 and 1952 Olympics.

E. Lou Gehrig was such a clumsy ball player that the boys in his neighborhood would not let him play on their team. But he was committed. He did not give up. Eventually, his name was entered into baseball's Hall of Fame.

F. Woodrow Wilson could not read until he was ten years old. But he was a committed person. He became the twenty-eighth President of the United States.

G. At the age of seven, he had to go to work to help support his family. At nine, his mother died. At twenty-two, he lost his job as a store clerk. At twenty-three, he went into debt and became a partner in a small store. At twenty-six, his partner died leaving him a huge debt. By the age of thirty-five, he had been defeated twice when running for a seat in Congress. At the age of thirty-seven, he won the election. At thirty-nine, he lost his reelection bid. At forty-one, his four-year-old son died. At forty-two, he was rejected for a land officer role. At forty-five, he ran for the Senate and lost. At forty-seven, he was defeated for the nomination for Vice President. At forty-nine, he ran for Senate again and lost again. At the age of fifty-one, he was elected President of the United States. During his second term of office, he was assassinated. But his name lives on among the greats in U.S. history—Abraham Lincoln.

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QUOTE # 6

"Competing in sports has taught me that if I'm not willing to give 120 percent, somebody else will." - Ron Blomberg New York Yankee 1969-1976, White Sox 1978, Baseball Hall of Fame – First DH in major league baseball

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QUOTE #7

Former pro basketball star Bill Bradley tells that at the age of 15 he attended a summer basketball camp that was run by Easy Ed Macauley, a former college and pro star. "Just remember that if you're not working at your game to the utmost of your ability," Macauley told his assembled campers, "there will be someone out there somewhere with equal ability who will be working to the utmost of his ability. And one day you'll play each other, and he'll have the advantage." - from Our Daily Bread

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QUOTE #8

"The achievement of your goal is assured the moment you commit yourself to it." - Mack R. Douglas - author of fifteen books, including How to Make a Habit of Succeeding. President of Discovery Seminars International, with offices in the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Egypt. Conducts seminars for, and training groups like General Motors, Boy Scouts of America, and Prudential Insurance, etc.

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Dedication #1

Plato wrote the first sentence of his famous Republic nine different ways before he was satisfied. Cicero practiced speaking before friends every day for thirty years to perfect his elocution. Noah Webster labored 36 years writing his dictionary, crossing the Atlantic twice to gather material. Milton rose at 4:00 am every day in order to have enough hours for his Paradise Lost. Gibbon spent 26 years on his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Bryant rewrote one of his poetic masterpieces 99 times before publication, and it became a classic. - Source Unknown.

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Dedication #2

Persistence paid off for American astronomer Clyde Tombaugh, who discovered the planet Pluto. After astronomers calculated a probable orbit for this "suspected" heavenly body, Tombaugh took up the search in March 1929. Time magazine recorded the investigation: "He examined scores of telescopic photographs each showing tens of thousands of star images in pairs under the dual microscope. It often took three days to scan a single pair. It was exhausting, eye-cracking work--in his own words, 'brutal, tediousness.' And it went on for months. Star by star, he examined 20 million images. Then on February 18, 1930, as he was blinking at a pair of photographs in the constellation Gemini, 'I suddenly came upon the image of Pluto!" It was the most dramatic astronomic discovery in nearly 100 years.

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QUOTE #9

"All great masters are chiefly distinguished by the power of adding a second, a third, and perhaps a fourth step in a continuous line. Many a man had taken the first step. With every additional step you enhance immensely the value of your first." - Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882 American Poet

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QUOTE #10

"You can do what you want to do, accomplish what you want to accomplish, attain any reasonable objective you may have in mind -- not all of a sudden, perhaps not in one swift and sweeping act of achievement -- but you can do it gradually, day by day and play by play, if you want to do it, if you work to do it, over a sufficiently long period of time." - William E. Holler 1864-1898

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“Take the Plunge”

“Watch me dive off the high board, Dad,” my then ten-year-old son called out. I looked up to the ten-foot-high diving board and waited as he stood at the edge, stooped over, arms extended. He had jumped off the high board many times before, but now his nerve seemed to falter as he contemplated streaking through the air headfirst.

The swimming pool was vacated, so he could take his time. “You can do it, Robby,” I encouraged. But he couldn’t. Not that evening. For 20 minutes he attempted to muster the courage to make the plunge, and he finally gave up when the pool closed for the night.

“I feel disappointed in myself,” Robby said on the way home. “I feel terrible. I know I can do it, though. I know I can.”

He persuaded me to take him swimming again the next evening. Like the night before, we happened to be the only swimmers. “I’m going to do it this time,” he said emphatically. “Watch me!””

He climbed the ladder and walked to the end of the board as I watched. Again I encouraged him. Again he hesitated. As the previous night, his nerve failed. It seemed that he would never conquer his fear and leap.

The lifeguards on duty helped me cheer him on. “You can do it, Robby,” we all exhorted. “Just do it! Don’t think about it. Just do it!”

For 30 minutes we encouraged him. For 30 minutes he started and stopped, he leaned and straightened and fought the fear that held him back.

And then it happened. He extended his arms, bent over the edge and fell headfirst into the water! He emerged to the sounds of laughter and congratulations. He did it! He finally did it! And before he went home, he did it three more times.

Robby learned something about facing his fear that evening. But he learned something else, too. He learned that some things can’t be done with less than full commitment. A chasm cannot be leaped in two small jumps and a dive cannot be made a little at a time. Sometimes you just have to do it.

Some things require no less than full commitment. What is requiring your full commitment? Will you take the plunge?

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QUOTE # 11

“When I was a boy, my father, a baker, introduced me to the wonders of song,” tenor Luciano Pavarotti relates. “He urged me to work very hard to develop my voice. Arrigo Pola, a professional tenor in my hometown of Modena, Italy, took me as a pupil. I also enrolled in a teachers college. On graduating, I asked my father, ‘Shall I be a teacher or a singer?’

“‘Luciano,’ my father replied, ‘if you try to sit on two chairs, you will fall between them. For life, you must choose one chair.’

“I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it’s laying bricks, writing a book—whatever we choose—we should give ourselves to it. Commitment, that’s the key. Choose one chair.”
- Luciano Pavarotti, Famous Italian Tenor

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"Awareness Insights" (Excerpt) (LEADER READs BOLD)

- **Life Tracker** - Stay on top of what is most important to you.
- **Insight Tracker** - Track insights and events. Bring more meaning to your life.
- **Consciousness** - Track your growth. Identify your next growth step.
- **Blocks** - What are your challenges and life lessons?
- **Block Buster** - Take the first step to break through life challenges.
- **Manifesting** – Plan 9 steps to creating what you desire.
- **Decision Making** - Learn how to make effective, informed choices.
- **Dream Day** - Idealize your perfect day, week, month, year so you can begin to live them.
- **Time** - Reflect on how well you are using the time of your life.
- **Motivation** - Tap into and maintain your natural power and passion.
- **Past** - Create a visual, revealing snapshot of your past.
- **Personal Pathway** - Where are you on your life paths?
- **Business Plan** - Work ON your business, instead of IN your business.
- **Commitment Process** - Clarity builds willpower.
- **Life Purpose** - Clarify your direction and destiny in life.

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Philippians 3:12-14

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"Pope Pius the Ninth"

Pope Pius the Ninth once received a letter very different from the many he received every day. It was written on a plain sheet of paper; there were ink spots on it, crossed out words, and spelling mistakes. A very young boy living in a suburb of Rome had sent it. The boy's mother was ill; he had no money to help her and he asked the Pope for the thirty-seven lire he wanted for medicine. Pius had his secretary reply to the boy, saying that he would receive him at the palace the next morning.

On the following day the now happy boy went to the Vatican, presented his letter of audience, and asked that he be taken to see the Pope. The guards were very surprised, looked at the letter and passed it on to an officer to check, and finally let the boy into the palace. The boy's honest and determined look immediately appealed to the Pope, who after a little talk, gave him a gold coin. The boy thanked him then innocently mentioned that it was only twenty-five lire he had received and he wanted thirty-seven.

"Of course,' answered the Pope, "you are right, I had forgotten the exact amount you needed." Then he took a second coin from his purse and gave it to the boy. But this is too much now," the boy pointed out, "and I have no change. But I will bring it tomorrow." "That's all right; come and see me again tomorrow," replied the Pope.

The boy was very prompt and arrived next morning with the change. This greatly impressed the Pope. In the meantime he had his secretary make some enquiries about the boy and his sick mother. The secretary had reported to the Pope that the boy was truthful and conscientious and that the family was very poor. So when the boy arrived with the change the Pope told him that he would pay for his education and that his mother would be properly cared for during her illness.

And so it was done. The boy received a good education and became very successful in all that he did, worthy of the Pope who had helped him.

This story is about honesty, not about big things but small things, not asking for too much, only what is necessary. It's also a story about making a commitment and honouring it. Today, the media abounds with stories of confidence tricksters, about misrepresentation, about dishonesty. Society now expects that we should question every offer of help or kindness in case there is a 'bottom line' and we become a victim.

One morning 2,000 years ago God made us a great offer. He placed on earth His Son who would live and work among His people. Jesus would not ask too much of us, only that we should honor His name and go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything He commanded us. And He made a commitment that He would be with us always, to the very end of the age. It is a commitment that He will honour.

The dishonesty of many has caused us to become sceptics. But there is no dishonesty about God - He gave His Son to us as a gift, He made an offer of forgiveness and He made a promise of eternal life to those who believe. No matter how society behaves, this is honesty and commitment that we can rely on.

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QUOTE # 12

"Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions. And the actions which speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none. Coming through time after time, year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism." - Source unknown

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"INCREDIBLE JOURNEY"

Be strong and courageous . . . for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. - Joshua 1:9

Thomas and Tina Sjogren of New York City recently completed an incredible journey.

In May 2002, they skied and swam their way without any outside help (such as sled dogs or food airdrops) to 90-1/4 N latitude–the North Pole. Earlier they had successfully reached the South Pole and climbed Mount Everest, sometimes called "the third pole." Only three people before them had managed to go to all three poles, and Tina is the first woman ever to accomplish the feat.

An incredible journey, a seemingly impossible goal. These words also describe the Israelites at the end of the Exodus, as they stood poised to enter the Promised Land. The legendary Moses had died, and Joshua was trying to fill his big shoes as the head of a restless and wandering nation. He may have been tempted to fear or feel discouragement, despite his special anointing for the task at hand and the fact that he was *"filled with the spirit of wisdom"* (Deuternomy. 34:9).

In this difficult situation, God made Joshua several promises and gave him several commands. He renewed the promise of conquering and inheriting the land, and specifically promised him victory in battle. Most significantly, He guaranteed His constant presence: *"I will never leave you nor forsake you . . . the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"* (Joshua 1: 5, 9). The Lord also told Joshua to be strong and courageous, and repeated this several times for emphasis. He reminded him to meditate on and obey carefully His Law. In summary, Joshua could meet the challenge if He trusted the person, presence, power, and Word of God.

Joshua wisely responded with complete faith: Let's go claim the land! He was confident because it depended on the Lord, not him (Joshua 1:10-11). As God's chosen leader, he understood that he must lead with strength and courage flowing from obedient submission, with confidence based upon the surety of God's promises, and with humility that properly credits God with the victory and gives Him the glory.

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QUOTE #13

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now." - Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe 1749-1832 German poet, novelist, playwright, courtier, and natural philosopher, one of the greatest figures in Western literature

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Proverbs 16:3

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QUOTE #14

"It does not take great men to do great things; it only takes consecrated men." - Philipps Brooks, author of the Christmas carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem

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1 Kings 8:54-61 Solomon's Benediction

When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven.

And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying:

"Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.

"May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers.

"And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else.

" Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day."

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QUOTE #15

"It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do, no matter how hard it is, than to face the responsibilities of not doing it." - J. R. Miller - author

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"Our Way and God's Way"

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. – Psalm 127:1

Our way is the path of human wisdom and self-reliance. It leads to frustration and emptiness. God's way involves trusting Him, obeying Him, and depending on Him. It leads to satisfaction and joy--in part on earth but fully in heaven. Each day let's choose to live God's way. --HVL

Life is wasted, useless, and of no avail
Unless we're living daily for the Lord;
Let's pledge ourselves anew to living godly,
Anything less we simply can't afford. -- Adams

God always gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him.

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