

TOTAL COMMITMENT EQUALS RAPTURING FAITH

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The last hours of decision time are fading away. Choose ye! (Deut. 30: 15:19)

In the lost world, we see people being presented with the DECISION of whether or not to obey the convicting Spirit of God that is falling on them. If they obey, repent, and turn from their sins, they are received into the *circle of safety*. If not, no man knows if he will have another chance. The end of this world as we have known it is staring us in the face. Beyond question, it is DECISION TIME, not only in the lost world, but also in the churches where the people are called Christians.

This SEPARATION reaches into our MESSAGE CHURCHES the same as in the denominational churches. In our Message Churches, we can clearly see God confronting us with decisions that have to do with TOTAL COMMITMENT to Himself. Decisions that will have a definite bearing on whether or not we go in a Rapture, or be left during tribulation to have the world purged out of us!

In John 7:17, there is a short, but powerful Scripture, and very meaningful. In it we are told that if a person wants to understand the Scriptures, he will first have to obey God. That is to say, he must walk in all the Light God has given him up to that time! **"If any man will DO HIS WILL (God's Will), He shall KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE."** Following that statement of the Lord, we could say that those who refuse to obey the Light they already have will be shut off from further Light. Those are not the words of some minister, but God's own words! And, how very thought provoking they should be!

In this writer's opinion, that is one main reason for God's Children being trapped in false doctrine. Somewhere in the past, God has sent them some truth that they have refused to live by, or else it could be they do not have the One living in them who "Leads into all Truth." Those who DESIRE truth, and strive to OBEY, repenting when they fail, will always receive revelation. Isa. 30:21, **"And thine ears shall hear a WORD behind thee, saying, THIS [IS] THE WAY, WALK YE IN IT."** We do often need to hear a Voice behind us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Our subject is TOTAL COMMITMENT, and the Lord Jesus taught much on this. In Matt. 10:37-39. He said, **"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of Me; And he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; And he that loseth his life shall find it."** In these three verses, we see His call to total commitment! In requiring us to put Him before father and mother, and before son or daughter, we are to understand that since these persons are the closest ties we have on Earth, then NO PER-

SONS should be allowed to come between us and our Creator.

In the spiritual realm, no person, including a wife or husband, can ever be placed before God. Our obedience is to Him first and always. The following parable will show that there is nothing in this natural world that our Lord will allow us to place before Him.

Luke 14:16-35 **"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:**

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one [consent] began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel [them] to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26 If any [man] come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have [sufficient] to finish [it]?

29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish [it], all that behold [it] begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

34 Salt [is] good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; [but] men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

In the beginning of the story, we are to understand that the "certain man" who made the Great Supper was God Himself. Also, we see in Verse 16 that this man (God) "bade many." The invitation went

out to ALL MEN. The word "many", as used here, implies that *everyone* was invited. It is the same word used in Matt. 20:16, which says, "... for MANY be called but few chosen." Every person on Earth is called to Salvation at some time or another during their life. If not so, then God is a respecter of persons, and the Scripture declares that He is not!

Also, in Verse 16, we understand that this GREAT SUPPER is the Marriage Supper of The Lamb, which is for the Bride of Christ. This goes without saying to those who have revelation of the Scripture! This being true, then can we see that our Great God of Love has sent His precious invitation to ALL MEN, and that it is not His fault if some refuse it. Where does this leave us then when we teach that some can come to the Supper and some cannot?

We cannot deny the fact that the invitation given in our parable is to ALL MEN! Neither can we deny that in the parable, our Lord Jesus is speaking of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, which is for HIS Bride! Following this line of thought, we can see that ALL MEN have been invited to be God's Bride. But as the Scripture says, "Many (all) are called but few are chosen." Why are not more chosen? Simply because they do not heed the call! We are not to sit back and wonder if certain ones can come to the Supper, and perhaps think that some others cannot come.

With His foreknowledge, He elected those whose hearts desire was toward Him. This is the Scripture, as stated in Rom.8: 29 (and other places), "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many

Brethren." It is very factual that no man can come unless "The Father which has sent Me draw him." (John 6:44) By calling all men, God retains His total Righteousness. By leaving the choice up to man AFTER He calls him, God abides by His decision to make all Angels and Men *free-moral agents*. This is a meeting in the middle of the road between *God's Election* and man's *free-moral agency*; it is the proper balance in the Scripture. Many will testify that the doctrine of Election is true, and will also admit that *free-moral agency* is true, but it took a Word Prophet to tie the two doctrines together so that they are compatible with each other.

There is a time before God convicts the hearts of the lost that they CANNOT COME to Him. But once He draws us, and we see our need to repent and turn to our Saviour, we become responsible to come! In this sense then, man will give an account for his responsibility; he will reap the harvest of his own decision. If this were not true, then there would be no need of the White Throne Judgment. The lost would be as robots, programmed to eternal damnation without any say in the matter. But this is not the case. There will be a White Throne Judgment, and every man "Shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12) No man will be able to truthfully say, "I was not invited to the Supper." The invitation will be on record, the hour, day, week, and month that it was sent. (For most of us, the invitation was given many times before we accepted.)

In Verse 18 of our parable, we see that "They ALL with one consent began to make excuse." This is always the reaction of natural man to the call of God. But while the grace of God continues

to work in our hearts, some finally stop resisting and turn to the Saviour. But alas, many never become willing to turn loose of the things of the world, a piece of ground, a yoke of oxen, a wife or husband, a job, a reputation, or perhaps a bank account as seen in the story of the Rich Young Ruler!

In Verse 24, we see what should be a most disturbing statement by our Lord, **“For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of My Supper.”** Remember, all are invited to be Bride! **“And the Spirit and the Bride say Come. And let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come. And WHOSEVER WILL, let him take of the water of Life freely.”** (Rev. 22:17) When the last call goes out to mankind, and they have refused it, the Lord said, **“They shall not taste of My Supper.”** In other words, they will not be in the Bride group, and will miss the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.

The Rapture will take place and millions will be left to enter into the Great Tribulation. There, by the Grace of God, some will repent and be purged of their sins. They will not be Bride, but will come up in the Second Resurrection and be given Eternal Life at the White Throne Judgment (See Rev. 20:12-15). Others who will also come up in the Second Resurrection will be forever lost (See Rev. 20:15)

In Verse 33, we see another statement by our Lord that is so often by-passed. **“So likewise, whosoever he be of you THAT FORSAKETH NOT ALL THAT HE HATH, he cannot be my disciple.”** In giving thought to this Scripture, we see that the **“whosoever”** spoken of here includes any and all that will receive Eternal Life. Whether they be Bride or Foolish Virgins, ALL will have to

forsake **“All that he hath.”** The difference between the Bride and the Foolish Virgins will be that the Bride forsakes all here and now, but the foolish will have to have the greater pressure of the Great Tribulation before they will **“Give up all.”**

As time goes by, and the Lord tarries, some of our dear Message Believers are turning back to the ways of the world. They look to the world's ways and programs more than to the revealed Word of God that is sent to produce in us Perfect Rapturing Faith.

We must never forget to preach that full Salvation is for **“whosoever will.”** I am so thankful for a God who is offering the invitation to the Marriage Supper to *any* and *all*. Friends, if any of us miss it; it will not be His fault. How grateful we should be that He is no **“Respecter of persons.”** The worse sinner on Earth can come and be the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, if he will repent and turn from his sins!

In Luke 23:33-34, we read about the scene at the crucifixion. The soldiers that had spit in the face of the Lord, pulled out His beard, beat Him without mercy, and pushed a crown of thorns down on His precious brow, were now driving spike nails into His hands and feet. In Verse 34, Jesus prayed a most amazing prayer, one that should forever encourage sinners to throw themselves upon His great love and mercy! Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”** My question is, **“Was our Lord only speaking idle words, or were they words that were meant to forever show forth the unfailing Grace of God?”** Was that prayer heard and honored by the Father? Remember, Jesus was the Father. (He said, **“I come in My Father's Name.”**) This

writer believes that we will spend eternity with those heartless men who were led to repentance by this prayer!

Has any lost person done worse than kill the precious Son of God? If not, then turn to Him at once, receive forgiveness, and accept His invitation to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Yes, even you, lost sinner friend, may come to this lovely Christ and be forgiven. Come today, it's about over!

Referring to the title of our sermon, we do know that the degree of our commitment to God determines the degree of our Faith. Our obedience to known light, or truth, opens the door for the Lord to reveal his Word to us (John 7:17). And the revealed Word is what produces Faith in our hearts. Therefore, those who reserve parts of their lives for themselves, refusing to open that door to the Lord, will be lacking in true revelation of the Word. John 12:25, **“He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto Life Eternal.”** Verse 26, **“.....If any man serve Me, him will my Father honor.”**

In our world of plenty, when many of us have more material things than ever before, there is a terrible sickness that takes hold of us. It is called **“Depression.”** I will make a statement that may strike you as strange at first, but please bear with me. I believe that depression is many times caused by our un-submitted will. We refuse to submit to the trials of life!

Our duty is to lay everything on the altar, submitting to the Scripture that declares, **“The steps of a good man are ORDERED by the Lord.”** (Ps. 37:23) Although we think we understand the way we should go, we often find that it is not in man to **“understand his own way.”** (Pr. 20:24) Ps 37:5,

“Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.” He will bring to pass HIS WILL in our lives.

The Scripture declares, **“His servants ye are to who ye obey.”** (Rom. 6:16) A mind that is not submitted to God’s ordering of our steps is a mind that will be constantly unhappy, and this lack of joy will eventually lead to depression. We must believe that our Lord had a plan for our life before the world was. Total commitment amounts to our submitting to the ordering of our steps, which will place us in HIS PLAN. Eph. 2:10, **“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”**

To be unhappy and in disagreement with the circumstances of our lives is to doubt God’s Word that declares, **“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are the called according to HIS PURPOSE.”** (Rom. 8:28) We must believe He is in *sovereign control* of the life we have committed to Him. We must accept the fact that He will not allow any more suffering than is needed to crucify our flesh-man. Many fail at this point, not understanding that God has set out to crucify us. We are not on a picnic; we are in a spiritual battle for Eternal Life, THE BATTLE OF THE MIND!

I will close with a Scripture that is completely life-changing for those who will wrap their spiritual arms around it and believe it every hour of every day. It is a Word that our Father gave me in the early days of my Christian life when I was confused about the leading of the Lord for my life. It is found in I Thess. 5:16-18. **“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing** (keep God constantly in our thoughts). Verse 18 holds the powerful key, **“In everything give thanks; for THIS is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”**

First, may I call your attention to Rom. 8:28, a companion Scripture? **“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose.”** In these two places, we are promised that everything that touches our lives is working together for our good. We will not FEEL that it is true, we will not UNDERSTAND it in the natural realm, and we will have to take it by Faith. God said it, and who will call Him a liar?

Now notice I Thess.5:18, **“In EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS; for THIS** (This circumstance that you find yourself in at any given moment) **For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”** I am praying for the Lord to open this verse to you as you read. It simply means what it says; we are to thank God for everything that comes into our

lives! Why? Because, **“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,”** (Ps. 37:23) and our Lord knows exactly what we need every day of our lives to perfect us. Do you see it? **“For THIS** that is happening to you right now is God’s Will for you in Christ Jesus!

We are not teaching that we are to go along with everything that comes into our lives. We know that whatever is contrary to the Word we are to resist. But the great point is, nothing can come that has not been ordained by God. So we will accept all things as having been ordained by Him, resisting what should be resisted and obeying what should be obeyed.

This is a sure-cure for a rebellious spirit, which spirit, when entertained, always leads to *depression*! Depression is what takes hold of us when we are constantly disagreeing with the way our God is ordering our steps. Know He is in full control, praise Him for that control, and choose to be full of joy over the fact that His ordering of your steps is preparing you for the Rapture! Depression is a spirit of the Devil that comes to set you against what God is working out in your life. Put him out, believe the Word, and receive fullness of Joy. God is on our side, but remember, He is going to crucify our flesh-man, so get ready to die to it.

I’ve preached, now may I receive grace to walk in it myself. Amen!

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