

ALL IN Series – Part Six
Lifestyle Christianity
Lester Zimmerman

Colombia Church report – Power Point

Opens with ALL IN Video.....

Today is the last part of our ALL IN series. We have been exploring what it means to go all in with God. What it means to be fully surrendered to Him.

The sad reality is that it is possible for us to go to church every week and never go ALL IN with Jesus. That's called religion and there is no life or power in it.

The Christian life is meant to be so much more than that.

God wants us to live by faith - not fear, play offense - not defense, use all we got, holding nothing back, being surrendered fully to his purpose in our lives.

We don't just add Jesus to our lives like another friend on Facebook. Jesus calls his followers to abandon all to him, go all-in, give it all up.

You see Christianity is more of a way of life than a belief system. We are called "followers of Jesus" which means we follow his example, his teachings, his moral code, his daily direction in our lives.

We are to make our faith our lifestyle not just a Sunday morning experience!

- We are - Empowered by God for daily encounters

Following Jesus is not easy, but it is fulfilling with eternal rewards.

Going ALL IN means different things to different people.

In this series we tried not to create a rigid definition of what it means to go ALL IN. Instead we asked a key question each week to challenge our hearts.

Today's question is: **Is my devotion to God consistent and enduring?**

Sometimes after a great youth retreat or conference or Sunday message we get all stirred up and we are ready to totally pursue God and take on the giants standing against us.

We are pumped and running high for awhile until our car breaks down, our boyfriend or girlfriend breaks up with us, the kids keep getting sick, the bills pile up and we find the devil is still harassing us.

- All at once the hard realities of life seems to stomp on our new zeal.

Going ALL IN means we praise God when things are going good and when things are going bad in our lives. We endure suffering and hardship with an unwavering faith that knows God is in control and will work all things together for my good and his eternal purposes.

As we go ALL IN with God he helps us have a consistent and enduring faith walk.

And when we give ourselves fully to him he does amazing things through us.

There is a story in the bible where God asked his people to go ALL IN. (Jos 3)

The Israelites were excited and ready to go into the Promised Land. God said now is the time to go take on the giants and get your inheritance. There was one problem however. The problem was that the Jordon River was at flood stage and there was no way for them to get across into the promised land.

We all have these times in our lives when we are faced with what seems like an insurmountable problem. We may feel we have a word from the Lord, but it seems to be out of our reach. But no problem is too big for God.

Read Joshua 3

God was ready to move in a powerful way on their behalf. But there were several things they needed to do if they wanted to see breakthrough in their lives. If they wanted to receive their inheritance in the promise land.

1. They needed to start moving. Vs.3-4

“When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before.

As you start moving you will know which way to go. Stop playing it safe. Stop waiting for a sign. Stop worrying about what God’s will is for you in the future and start doing something.

Start serving somewhere. Do something to bless someone else. Do what you can with what you have. Take a step out of your comfort zone. Do something.

STORY: As a young person I remember feeling a call to missions but had no idea where or what. So, I started checking out options. I applied to go with Wycliff to South America. I started moving toward that opportunity and God in his amazing way guided me to Baltimore instead, which was totally unexpected.

- Yes, I prayed but I did more than pray I started moving.

It’s hard to steer a car that is not moving. So, start moving toward something.

2. God often asks us to take a step of faith before we see the miracle. Vs.15-16

40 Years earlier when the children of Israel were at the Red Sea while fleeing Egypt they were allowed to wait until the waters parted and then they went into the dried-up river bed. God just did it and they watched.

But this time God did not give them the luxury of standing back and waiting for the waters to part. He said start moving toward the river and it wasn’t until they stepped into the raging water that the miracle happened, and the waters parted.

Sometimes as young Christians, God just does things for us that require little faith. But as we mature he expects us to grow in our faith and begin trusting him more.

God was expecting more from this generation than the previous one. This time they needed to exercise their faith more to get their miracle.

God is expected more of you today than when you first became a Christian.

STORY: For me starting Petra was a bigger step of faith than my first church plant. Before, things just kind of fell in place. This time it required more faith, more prayer as we had to contend for the land to see breakthroughs.

3. They consecrated themselves. Vs.5

Consecration prepares our heart for amazing things.

To consecrate means to surrender – to set ourselves apart for God’s purposes. To say, “not my will but your will be done” – to dedicate ourselves to purity, to devote ourselves to holy living.

Gabe Pilotti: “Surrender is not event, it is a process. Surrender results in surprises we would never otherwise experience. Greater the struggle of surrender, greater the surprise. If you think you have a lot to surrender just wait in his presence and see what the Father has planned for you.”

I like that. God loves to surprise his children with good things as we surrender to him.

The lesson in this Joshua story is that before the miracle comes surrender or consecration. Here is the promise to them and us.

Vs.5 Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.”

In the New Testament Paul explains consecration this way.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

In the Old Testament, a sacrifice was something set apart for God by being put on the altar. When people offered their sacrifice to God, it no longer belonged to the one offering it. It belonged to God, for His use and His purpose.

Today, when we consecrate ourselves to the Lord, we become a living sacrifice. We give up our own claims on ourselves and put ourselves completely in His hands. Previously, our life was for our use; now it is for His.

When we present ourselves to the Lord as a living sacrifice, we're saying, "I am all yours. I am ALL IN."

British Evangelist Henry Varley said something to a young man named D.L. Moody that changed his life and has also impacted my life and become my consecration prayer. Moody stated it this way:

"The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him. I will try my utmost to be that man."

That is my ALL IN Prayer.

Conclusion:

As we close this series let me pray a prayer of consecration over all of us.

After the prayer we will sing an old powerful hymn of consecration to the Lord. After that the prayer ministers will be available at the side for.....

PRAYER: Lord we together consecrate ourselves to you. We give ourselves as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to you. We go all in, with everything we have, holding nothing back. Take us and use us for your purposes. And like the children of Israel we look forward to the amazing things you will do in the days ahead - in us, through us and for us. In Jesus Name AMEN

Song of consecration: Take My Life and Let it Be

Dismissal

