

Matthew 5:31-37

“The Commitment of a Kingdom Subject”

The culture that we live in tends to dishonor commitments whether in the form of marriage or other promises. When Christ’s followers honor their commitment to Him, and others, it not only glorifies God, but they discover other benefits too.

Discussion Qs

- 1. Why might commitment be difficult generally in our culture?**
- 2. Why might people struggle in regard to commitment in the marriage relationship?**
- 3. How can yielding to Christ influence your level of commitment generally?**
- 4. What are some of the benefits of commitment to Christ that you have discovered in your marriage and other commitments?**
- 5. Who are some of the people in your life that you consider reliable or committed? Is it a trait that you think is admirable? Why or why not?**
 - a. Reflection: Do you think people who know you consider you to be a committed (reliable) person.**

prelude: Jesus Is Our King [2016 Vision]

When Jesus is king in the marriage realm His subjects commit to doing marriage God’s way

Share your experiences or questions via email at Jesusisourking@calvarynexus.org or use #Jesusisourking on social media

Pastor Justin Bell
Mobil Ave. Campus

Intro. Mike and vows, Am I going to be that kind of man?

Subject: The Commitment of a Kingdom Subject

Object: Commit to Christ

Context: Sermon on the Mount

Thesis: Honor commitment to Christ and you'll honor other commitments., Cf. Commitment begins with an attitude and behavior follows, Cf. failing to honor commitments is immoral

I. Commitment in marriage (v. 31-32)

A. Prevailing view in Jesus' day (v.31)

Furthermore [31] Cf. 17-30 re murder, anger, adultery & lust

It has been said Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce: rabbinical interpretations re the certificate of divorce [Deut 24:1]

Deut. 24:1 If a woman finds no favor in a man's eyes because he finds some uncleanness in her he may present her with a certificate of divorce.

i. Issue: what does *uncleanness* mean?

ii. Rabbi Hillel: [liberal, popular] if a man doesn't like her cooking, or is attracted to another woman [i.e. irreconcilable differences]

iii. Rabbi Shime'i [conservative, less popular] divorce only permitted in the case of sexual immorality/adultery

iv. the Deuteronomy passage does not encourage or command divorce

B. Jesus reveals God's standard (v.32)

Marriage Is a sacred and binding commitment

i. But I say: Jesus is declaring God's standard, not merely a rabbinical opinion

ii. sexual immorality: marital unfaithfulness, adultery is the only grounds for divorce. Even in the case of adultery you are not commanded in the NT to divorce

iii. Penalty per Mosaic law for adultery was death by stoning so that the widow was free to remarry.

C. Do Marriage God's way

1. Husband and wife are bound together until death separates [Gen. 2:24, Mt. 19:6, Rom. 7:2, Eph. 5:21-33]

2. God hates divorce [Mal. 2:16] CF. damage to couple and family

The problem: Divorce is related to hardness of heart [Matt. 19:10]

The solution: commit to do marriage (and life) God's way *and let's compare 10, 20 years from now and see whether marriages and families are healthier and happier*

3. If a spouse leaves the marriage the other is free to remarry [1Cor. 7:12-16]

4. If divorced and remarried, remain in current relationship [1Cor. 7:20]

5. What about Separation?

Question of Separation: (1) Only Separate in desperate circumstances (physical abuse) (2) Involve a pastor or biblical counselor, (3) The end goal of separation is always reconciliation

6. Divorce is not the unpardonable sin. The only unforgivable sin is rejecting Christ

How to Divorce Proof Your Marriage (or Future Marriage)

note re call to singleness

1. Use your season of singleness to become to kind of spouse someone wouldn't ever want to divorce.

2. Realize that dating can be practice for divorce: be slow to enter and slow to exit

3. Pursue a deep walk with the Lord

4. Seek to meet your spouse's needs (How can I serve?)

5. Endure the storms - Tim Keller Fact: most struggling marriages will actually begin to thrive if the couple can stay married for 5 more years

Transition: committed in marriage, committed to be people of our word

II. Commitment and promises (v. 33-37)

A. Prevailing view in Jesus day (v.33)

Don't swear falsely + Perform oaths to the Lord:

- i. Deut. 6:13 Mosaic law prohibited irreverent oaths, or light use of the Lord's name. Once God's name was used in a vow it became a solemn responsibility to perform
- ii. Hannah re Samuel (1Sam. 1), Jephthah (Judges 11), Joshua & Gibeonites (Josh 9)

B. Jesus reveals God's standard (v.34-37)

1. Commit to do what you say you'll do (without an oath) [34-36]

- i. The problem isn't oaths per se: God swore by Himself [Heb. 6:13, 7:21], Jesus submitted to an oath before the Sanhedrin [Matt. 26:63-64]
- ii. Invoking something higher to give credibility [e.g. mother's grave]
- iii. Rabbis concluded that depending how closely related to God the object was it determined the extent of how bound the person was to fulfill the oath. An entire section of the rabbinical commentary (Mishna) related to this topic.

2. A person who is committed to Christ is reliable [37] But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No: Lit. your word be "yes yes"

i. An oath is only as reliable as the person who makes it

ii. Be a person who means what they say and says what they mean

Telling people I will pray for them, saying "we should get lunch sometime", showing my kids I am a man of my word (telling Eden I would watch a movie with her)

iii. I For whatever is more than these is from the evil one. invoking a reference God in an oath is contrary to God's nature

Conc: Commit to Christ flows out of His commitment to us (He keeps His word and marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church [Communion])

If the only Gospel someone heard was your marriage, would they call it good news? If the only picture of God's faithfulness someone saw was your promises, would they count Him faithful?

**Pastor Bruce Zachary
Lewis Rd. Campus**

Intro. BZ + KZ and decision to be married 25 yrs ago and choice to do it God's way. Made vows to one another before God + those vows would be tested ...

Subject: The Commitment of a Kingdom Subject

Object: Commit to Christ and honor other commitments.

Context: Sermon on the Mount – Kingdom manifesto

Why might commitment be difficult generally in our culture?

Thesis: Honor your commitment to Christ, honor commitments to others, & glorify God

A. Commitment and promises in marriage [31-32]

1. Prevailing view in Jesus' day [31]

a. **Furthermore [31]** Cf. Matt. 5:17-30 re murder, anger, adultery & lust

b. **It has been said Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce:** rabbinical interpretations re the **certificate of divorce [Deut 24:1]**

Deut. 24:1 If a woman finds no favor in a man's eyes because he finds some uncleanness in her he may present her with a certificate of divorce.

i. **Issue: what does *uncleanness* mean?**

ii. **Rabbi Hillel:** [liberal, popular] if a man doesn't like her cooking, or is attracted to another woman [i.e. irreconcilable differences]

iii. **Rabbi Shime'i** [conservative, less popular] divorce only permitted in the case of sexual immorality/adultery

iv. The Deuteronomy passage does not encourage or command divorce

2. Jesus reveals God's standard [32] But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

a. **Marriage Is a sacred and binding commitment**

i. **But I say:** Jesus is declaring God's standard, not merely a rabbinical opinion

ii. **sexual immorality:** marital unfaithfulness, adultery is the only grounds for divorce. Even in the case of adultery you are not commanded in the NT to divorce

iii. Penalty per Mosaic Law for adultery was death so widow was free to remarry.

3. **Marriage God's way**

a. Bound together till death separates [Gen. 2:24, Mt. 19:6, Rom. 7:2, Eph. 5:21-33]

b. **God hates divorce [Mal. 2:16]** Cf. damage to couple and family

i. **The problem: divorce is related to hardness of heart [Matt. 19:10]**

c. **The solution: commit to do marriage (and life) God's way:** *let's compare 10, 20 years from now and see whether marriages and families are healthier and happier.*

i. **Ed Stetzer, cited in Christianity Today [2.14],** Christians who regularly read their Bibles, pray and worship have an 85-90+% satisfaction rate, and divorce rate of @10% [Cf. 50% re general pop.]

ii. Identify issues in the relationship and address them with love and God's Word

d. If single and desire marriage use this season to grow in Christ and become the kind of spouse no one wants to divorce. **#JesusismyBAE**

i. Be slow to enter & exits relationships, don't treat relationships as practice for divorce

e. Divorce is not the unpardonable sin. The only unforgivable sin is rejecting Christ, but let's commit from this day forward to honor God with our lives, and marriages.

B. Commitment and promises generally [33-37]

What are some of the benefits of commitment to Christ that you have discovered in your marriage and other commitments?

1. Prevailing view in Jesus day [33] you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.

a. Don’t swear falsely: Don’t write a check with your mouth that you don’t plan to pay

b. Perform oaths to the Lord:

i. Deut. 6:13 Mosaic law prohibited irreverent oaths, or light use of the Lord’s name. Once God’s name was used in a vow it became a solemn responsibility to perform

ii. Hannah re Samuel (1Sam. 1), Jephthah (Judges 11), Joshua & Gibeonites (Josh 9)

2. Jesus reveals God’s standard [34-37]

a. Commit to do what you say you’ll do (without an oath) [34-36]

But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black.

i. The problem isn’t oaths per se: God swore by Himself [Heb. 6:13, 7:21], Jesus submitted to an oath before the Sanhedrin [Matt. 26:63-64]

ii. Invoking something higher to give credibility [e.g. mother’s grave]

iii. Rabbis concluded that depending how closely related to God the object was it determined the extent of how bound the person was to fulfill the oath. An entire section of the rabbinical commentary (Mishna) related to this topic.

b. A person who is committed to Christ is reliable [37] But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No: Lit. your word be “yes yes”

i. We proclaim the nature of our Lord by our faithfulness in honoring promises

ii. An oath is only as reliable as the person who makes it

iii. Be a person who means what they say and says what they mean

iv. For whatever is more than these is from the evil one: invoking a reference to God in an oath is contrary to God’s nature

c. Someone can be committed and have integrity (do the right thing even if difficult) without Christ, but no motive to honor God by their commitments

Conc: Marriage is intended to display Christ’s commitment + faithfulness towards His church [Eph. 5:25-33]. Honor your commitment to Christ, and honor commitments to others and you will glorify God!

BZ + KZ and decision to be married 25 yrs ago and choice to do it God’s way. Made vows to one another before God + those vows have been tested, and we discovered that God is faithful + He has blessed our commitment to do life His way. No regrets!

Commit to Christ [Communion]