

Fully Committed  
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Deuteronomy 30:11-20

Let's begin by reading our text. This is Moses' third speech to the Israelites.

**Deuteronomy 30:11–20 (NLT)** — **11** “This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach. **12** It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?’ **13** It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?’ **14** No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it. **15** “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. **16** For I command you this day to love the Lord your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy. **17** “But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, **18** then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. **19** “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! **20** You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Opening: The title of this study on these verses is: “Fully Committed.” In relationships we often hear about commitment issues. What does that mean?

Illustration: [You must be a fan! Not really.] I can put on the clothes and LOOK like a TEAM FOLLOWER but three questions about you'd know I'm a FRAUD.

Years ago, Kyle Idleman wrote a book entitled: “*Not a Fan*.” His premise is simple: Jesus is not looking for “fans” (casual admirers of Christianity) but for fully committed “followers.” The book contrasts a “fan” as someone who likes Jesus, knows facts about Him, attends church, and appreciates the benefits of faith, but avoids real sacrifice or life change. A “follower,” by contrast, pursues an intimate, exclusive, lifelong relationship with Jesus that reshapes priorities, relationships, and daily decisions. Some have criticized the book as leaning toward a “works-based” faith, but I give it credit for making the point: Following Christ demands a CHOICE and a commitment.<sup>i</sup>

Back to “commitment issues.” The Israelites who were about to enter the Promised Land tended to have commitment issues and Moses knew it. They were “fans” of how God had miraculously led them for forty years but would they be TRUE FOLLOWERS in the new land? They had to make a CHOICE, a decision.

The point: Moses challenged Israel to CHOOSE LIFE by whole-heartedly committing to follow God. People have a similar choice today: Following Christ demands a CHOICE, a commitment, really a SURRENDER of my life. That is why we sing: *"I have DECIDED to follow Jesus; no turning back, no turning back."* Back to today's text:

- Verse 11: *"This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach...(verse 14) the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it."*
- This was a command NOT a suggestion: Make a choice for God!
- It was not difficult. They did not need to learn more information; they had personally witnessed God's greatness and been taught about Him all their lives.
- Verse 16: The choice he gave them was this: Love God, keep His commands, and "walk in His ways." Do this and be blessed!
- Verses 17 & 18: If your heart turns to other gods, you will be DESTROYED!
- Verse 19 is a famous quote:

**(NLT) 19** "Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live!

- They had to decide: Life or death, blessings or curses; no middle ground.
- What did that RIGHT CHOICE look like?

**20** You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

- Some might ask if Moses was saying salvation came through following the law.
- The answer is NO, and we verify that by reading what Moses wrote in Genesis 15:6 about Abram: *"And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith."* (Theological term: Imputation)
- The Bible Knowledge Commentary: *"Moses never taught the Israelites that they were justified by obeying the Law...in Deuteronomy 30...Moses was speaking to a believing people about fellowship, not justification. His point was simply that the full enjoyment of **life** would depend on their obeying God's Word...though no one could be justified by the Law, a believer could be blessed under the Law."<sup>ii</sup>*
- How does this speak to the New Covenant under which we live today?
- The Apostle Paul applied this passage to the gospel in Romans 10:6–9:

**Romans 10:6–9 (NLT)** — **6** But faith's way of getting right with God says, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will go up to heaven?'" (to bring Christ down to earth). **7** And don't say, "Who will go down to the place of the dead?" (to bring Christ back to life again)." **8** In fact, it says, "The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart." And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: **9** If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

- Paul was saying: *"You don't have to climb up to heaven or go down to the grave to find Jesus. The truth is right here, close to you—on your lips and in your heart."*

*If you say out loud, 'Jesus is Lord,' and truly believe that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*

- Many church members KNOW about Jesus, they need to SURRENDER to Him.
- What about the unsaved? Some will say, "Not yet, I need to think about it."
- The gospel is so simple a child can understand it. With a simple gospel message and the Holy Spirit speaking to their heart they have all they need to be saved.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- You can easily spot a sports fan. How can you spot a Christ-follower?
- What is a follower of Christ? What do they believe and how do they live?
  - I believe everything Jesus said about Himself is true. (John 14:6)
  - I believe everything the Bible says about Him is true. (1 Tim. 3:16)
  - I am sorry for my sin, and I trust Him for eternal life. (Eph. 2:8-9)
  - I read His word to know about Him and how to please Him. (Rom. 12:2)
  - I talk to Him (prayer) because following Him is a relationship. (John 15:15)
  - With the help of His Holy Spirit, and by His grace I will desire to grow to be more like Him. (Gal. 2:20 & 2 Cor. 3:18)
  - When I want and what He commands are in conflict, I will deny myself and do what He wants me to do instead of what I want to do. (Luke 9:23)
  - I will tell others about Him. (Matthew 28:19-20)
  - Finally, (because He died on the cross for me) when I experience difficulty for being his follower, I will not run and hide. I will bear that difficulty (my cross) and keep following him gladly. (Matthew 16:24)
- As we read this description, we must ask ourselves, "Have I fully surrendered to living like that?" Though following Christ as Savior and Lord is a once for all time decision, even after we are saved, we still must DECIDE to live that way.
- Because Jesus knows us and our human frailty, He said in **Luke 9:23 (NLT)** — If you want "to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. (Emphasis mine)
- Living a Christ-like life is a DAILY decision that can only be accomplished by His grace and help of His Spirit.
- When we think about our relationship with Christ, let's make sure we are committed and surrendered to be a FOLLOWER and not just a FAN.

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<sup>i</sup> Not a Fan Updated and Expanded: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus Paperback – February 2, 2016 by Kyle Idleman (Author) Zondervan

<sup>ii</sup> Deere, J. S. (1985). Deuteronomy. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 316). Victor Books.