

Formula for Commitment

Jn 21:15-19

INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about John Audubon, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p 71.
- B. Peter needed to know how to be committed to Jesus.
 - 1. Peter had boasted that he would lay down his life for the Lord (Jn 13:37).
 - 2. Yet, that very night Peter denied he even knew who Jesus was.
 - 3. In this conversation, Jesus shows Peter how to be committed.
 - a. Peter seems to have been concerned that Jesus had not forgiven him.
 - b. In this narrative, Jesus shows Peter that he is fully forgiven.
 - c. Jesus also tells Peter what he needs to do to be committed.

IN ORDER TO BE COMMITTED, WE MUST LOVE JESUS, vv 15-17

- A. Jesus asked Peter three times, "Peter, do you love me?"
 - 1. Jesus' real question means, "Peter, are you fully devoted to me? Am I first in your life?"
 - 2. Jesus wants to know where Peter's level of commitment really is.
- B. Loving Jesus means that we put him first in our lives.
 - 1. The Scriptures affirm this.
 - a. Mt 6:24.
 - b. Ex 20:2-3.
 - 2. Our interests cannot be divided--Illustration about Civil War soldier who wore Union pants & a Confederate coat.
- C. Loving Jesus also means that we give up the pleasures of this world which conflict with Scripture
 - 1. Js 4:4.
 - 2. Someone has rightfully said, "You cannot walk with God while you run with the world."
- D. Loving Jesus means that we obey his word.
 - 1. Jn 14:15.
 - 2. We must do this if we claim to love him.
- E. The next time we sing, "Oh, how I love Jesus!" let's mean it!
 - 1. 1 Jn 3:18.
 - 2. Do you really love Jesus?

IN ORDER TO BE COMMITTED, WE MUST SERVE JESUS, vv 15-17

- A. Each time Jesus asked Peter about his level of commitment, Peter would reply, "Lord, you know that I love you."
 - 1. Jesus then told Peter, "Feed my lambs . . . Tend my sheep . . . Feed my sheep."
 - 2. In other words, Jesus was telling Peter, "Take care of my church."
 - 3. Peter faithfully served the Lord.
 - a. He preached the sermon at Pentecost
 - b. He was the first to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
 - c. He wrote two epistles in which he guided the church.
- B. In order to be committed, we must serve.
 - 1. This is the lesson Jesus gave his apostles (Mt 20:26-28).
 - a. The mother of James & John had just asked Jesus to give her sons positions of authority in his kingdom.
 - b. Jesus taught his apostles that greatness doesn't come from authority; it comes from service.

2. We need to find an area of service & serve faithfully.
 3. Our service must resemble Jesus' service (Phil 2:3-8).
 - a. When we serve, we must be committed to serving, not to getting the credit.
 - b. Too many people serve just to get the credit.
- C. In this passage, Jesus is specifically discussing meeting others' spiritual needs.
1. The greatest service we can do is to meet others' spiritual needs.
 2. Illustration about James Kraft, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, pp 331-332.

IN ORDER TO BE COMMITTED, WE MUST FOLLOW JESUS, vv 18-19

- A. Jesus tells Peter to follow him.
1. Jesus makes it clear what he means when he says, "Follow me"--Jesus means that Peter is going to die for his faith.
 2. When Peter had grown old, someone would take him where he does not wish to go.
 3. Tradition states that Peter was crucified upside down.
- B. We are so blessed in this nation--we do not face physical persecution.
- C. But, Jesus still calls upon us to suffer for our faith.
1. Jn 15:20.
 2. 1 Pt 2:21.
 - a. Peter was speaking to Christians who were facing physical persecution.
 - b. His message is: Since Jesus suffered physically, his disciples must be willing to suffer physically.
 - c. Even though we do not suffer physically, we must be willing to suffer for our faith.
- D. We do still suffer in this country.
1. People love to make fun of those who do what is right.
 2. People love to make members of the church.
 - a. Granted, it would be easier to compromise.
 - b. Yet, Jesus calls upon us to suffer for the faith.
 3. Illustration about Nixon's "enemies list"--*Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p 262.
- E. We need to follow Jesus' example in every area of our lives.
1. Jesus is the perfect example for us in all areas of our life.
 2. We could spend the rest of this night discussing what a wonderful example he is.
 3. We would do well to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?"

CONCLUSION

- A. In this life, we must be committed to Jesus.
- B. Are you committed? Do you need to come to Jesus?