

**‘Commitment’ is not ‘Conversion’
BUT
a ‘converted’ person will be ‘committed’**

I had an interesting email recently from a ‘young-in-the-faith believer’ who was sharing how difficult it is at times to discern if someone who claims to be a Christian is actually a Christian. This person referred to someone they knew who claimed –

- To have been 'raised as a born again Christian
- To have ‘fallen away’ in their late teens
- To have returned to church, to have ‘made a commitment to the Lord’, and who claimed they were now stronger in faith than ever.

My email inquirer wondered what my thoughts were on this matter. This was my reply and I hope it may be helpful to others who read this –

Hi xxx

This certainly is a problem in much of professing Christendom today and often is 'the fruit' of what I have referred to in the past as 'decisional regeneration' - I think I perhaps sent you at one time a little booklet by that name. For a start no one can be **‘raised as a born again Christian’** - when born we are **"dead in trespasses and sins"** and so a work of regeneration/conversion is an essential requirement before anyone can claim to be a Christian.

As for the expression **‘made a commitment to the Lord etc’** I want to reproduce now part of a very helpful leaflet I came across many moons ago and it deals with this expression –

"150 years ago Britain led the world in missionary effort both at home and abroad... Satan could not allow this to continue so he determined to distract the people of God from the vital task of preaching the gospel. The central theme of forgiveness of sin through the lawful substitutional death of Jesus Christ had to be side-tracked. Words like repentance, atonement, justification and salvation had to be phased out and emphasis placed on the universal ideals of Love, Peace Joy etc.

The false religious systems, already devised by Satan, all work on the same basic principle i.e. 'What man can do for God' in opposition to 'What God has done for man in Jesus Christ'... If Satan could introduce what is most noble and sincere from his false religions into Christianity, he would have a lever to bring Christians into BONDAGE.

What he needed was something that appealed to the natural desires of me and yet appeared to be super-spiritual. He could then use it as a basis for Christian fellowship, a SUBSTITUTE for CONVERSION.

Satan's master-stroke was to introduce into the Christian vocabulary 'commitment', a word that appears nowhere in scripture (except in its alternative meanings **1.** to commit sin etc; **2.** where it simply means to entrust e.g. **“Commit thy way unto the Lord” Psalm 37:5**). This word is however much used by extreme political organisations. The Oxford English Dictionary defines commitment as 'engagement that restricts Freedom of Action'.

Commitment sounds very spiritual, but in fact is a subtle change of emphasis from GRACE to WORKS: It is what Christ has done on the cross of Calvary that is **“The Pearl of Great Price”**; man's commitment to God is a pitiful effort of his own will and vanity.

Commitment is NOT FAITH. Faith places all confidence in God's ability to hold on to the believer: 'Unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy' (Jude 24). Commitment is the opposite, it emphasises man's duty to hold onto God by his own effort.

Commitment is NOT PERSEVERANCE. The biblical doctrine of 'the perseverance of the saints' is God-centred, and means a perseverance in faith. If the believer is to live a holy life, it must be centred in what God is doing in his life and NOT in his own commitment to God.

Commitment is NOT CONVERSION. The increasing 'fellowship' between some professing Evangelicals and Roman Catholics is not on the basis of conversion but on the basis of commitment to the 'Lordship of Christ'. Remember Jesus said **“Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess to them I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23)**. Here the Lord clearly states that neither professed commitment to the Lord ship of Christ etc are to be taken as evidence of conversion.

Commitment is the common denominator with all the modern cults... It is used to bring members/believers into BONDAGE by offering Peace, Love Joy etc if they will commit themselves... The word BONDAGE is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as: 'subjection to constraint, influence, and obligation' - a good definition of commitment. What a contrast with the words of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, **“If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:31-32 & 36).**”

Hope this is helpful

Blessings

Cecil

A person's **'commitment'** is not the cause of their **'conversion'** as that would be a **“work”** of which they could **“boast”** (Ephesians 2:8-9) **BUT** it should be an obvious 'fruit' in the sense that a person who has truly been **'converted'** by Christ is fully **'committed'** to the cause of Christ as the Apostles Peter and Paul were (1 Peter 4:19; 2 Timothy 1:12).

