

Commitment vs. Trust

September 7, 2016

In response to a dialogue that was taking place in my Ministry class the other day, I said to a student, "We will commit to someone we trust." This statement is entirely true in our human relationships but also in our connection to God.

I don't know how many times I have heard through the years, church people saying that people need to be more committed: more committed to Jesus, more committed to the church, more committed to the work ahead. There is frustration expressed because it seems that some don't follow through and as a result, we bemoan the lack of commitment on the part of others.

But I think we have a real problem here. The issue for people is, not that they are not committed to Christ, but that they don't trust Christ with their lives.

Commitment is not a problem when trust is present in a relationship. When a person fully trusts that Christ will provide for all of their needs (emotional, psychological, physical), they become fully committed to his work and his way in their lives. When they are uncertain that Jesus will take care of them, then commitment is only half-hearted.

If there is a lack of commitment in our churches, perhaps it is because the church is more interested in what the person can do for the church. Perhaps it is because they are afraid that Christ won't be there for them when they need him most. It may be that they think the church is just using them and not caring for them and therefore cannot be trusted.

I know in my experience with Jesus, when I struggle with commitment, it is not because I don't want to do what I need to do. It is because I am uncertain that I can trust and depend on upon him. However, when I surrender to the truth that Jesus is perfectly trustworthy, then I am fully and completely committed to Him.

Instead of demanding that people become more committed, we need to help them to see more clearly how much Christ takes care of them. We need to help others see that Jesus is trustworthy and can be reliable for all their spiritual, emotional and physical needs.

As people trust Jesus more (and as I trust Jesus more), commitment follows. Instead of beating myself up (or others) because of a lack of commitment, I now choose to focus on how much I am willing to trust Jesus. I focus on how much he has cared for me in the past and how he is caring for me in the present. When I celebrate his care of me, commitment to him flows out in my life.

Instead of working harder and being more committed, today I am simply trusting Jesus more and more – and letting the commitment take care of itself!