

WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LACK OF SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT BY BRETHREN?

TEXT: ROMANS 12 :1-2

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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous references in the Bible addressing the Christian's commitment in various aspects of life; to our families, neighbors, employers, the church, our health, and in all things we do and say (*Eph. 6:5, Heb. 10:25, 1Cor. 6:19,20*). But the Bible also teaches that the chief commitment of our lives is to God Himself. Jesus said,

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment" (Matt. 22:37-38).

The commitment of Brethren spiritually cannot be compromised for any reason. Whatever is responsible for lack of spiritual commitment by any individual can be attributed to the failure of that individual for not adhering to teachings and the inability for self-development. (*Matt.28: 19-20, 2Tim.2:15*).

THE IMPORTANCE TO BE SPIRITUALLY COMMITTED TO THE LORD

Jesus is telling us that every aspect of our being, every facet of our lives must be committed to loving and serving God. This means that we must hold nothing back from Him because God holds nothing back from us (*John 3:16*).

Furthermore, Jesus tells us that our commitment to Him must be total and supersede our commitment to even our families:

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26-27).

Such commitment means our family relationships may be severed to satisfy God. It means our commitment to Christ demands, if given any situation, we turn away from them and continue with Jesus (**Lk. 12:51-53**).

The bottom line is that those who cannot make that kind of commitment cannot be His disciple. The lack of spiritual commitment starts when one is not able to make concrete decision to be on the part of God.

Sad but true, there are some people who claim to be "spiritual giants" in the Faith, yet they are still "babes" in so many ways. Are you one of them?

What are some of the signs to detect if you are still undeveloped as a child?

In (**1 Cor. 3:1**) Paul says:

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." "...could not speak unto you as unto spiritual".

Could there be sadder words spoken by a Preacher to his congregation?

The Apostle Paul was addressing the Corinthian Church here - a Church that was enriched with much knowledge and many spiritual gifts.

Yet, in spite of their many blessings and graces, they remained as "**babes in Christ.**" They could not "**handle**" the weightier matters of the law. They were not able to understand the deep mysteries or higher truths of the Gospel. This is the beginning of lack of spiritual commitment among children of God.

HOW COULD THIS BE? WHAT WAS THEIR PROBLEM LOOKING AT OURSELVES?

So many today are "**babes in Christ**" when they ought to be "**Giants in the Faith.**" They can't seem to go beyond the simplest doctrines of Christianity to the weightier matters of holiness and sanctified living. This is evident by their lack of discernment in adhering to the teachings of False Teachers and Prophets who offer them a license for sin. They also seem to follow every "**Tom, Dick, and Harry**" who comes to town with a so-called "**new revelation**" from the Word which agrees to their lusts.

What are the signs of spiritual immaturity as outlined in the Word of God?

How can you detect if you are still a "babe" when you should be a "Giant"? A lot could be traced to worldliness (**Rom. 12 :2-3**).

THOSE WHO LACK SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT CANNOT "STOMACH" MEAT

In (**1 Cor. 3:2**) Paul says:

"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

These are Christians who are not sufficiently advanced in the teachings of the Word of God. They are still majoring on the simplest and easiest truths of God's Word. They see Him as a God of Love but can't picture Him as a God of wrath and judgment.

Hence, they resist any kind of "**strong**" or "**hard**" preaching against sin. It simply doesn't fit into their elementary theology. In their meager understanding of spiritual matters, they totally reject the Biblical concept of the "**Fear of God**," for example. They can't seem to understand how one can "**Fear**" a God whom they are called to "**Love**".

THEY HAVE NOT FORSAKEN THEIR FOOLISH WAYS

Proverbs 9:6 says:

"Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding."

These are Christians who have not yet broken off from all "**bad company**." They still fellowship with the "**unfruitful works of darkness**." They converse with them, adhere to their counsel, and conform to their ways (**Rom. 12:2**).

Rather than live to serve the Lord, they live for pleasure. They have no spiritual goals. They don't choose the Path of Wisdom. They resist any Godly advice but restriction on Self and worldly friends. What they set their heart on doing, they do without looking back or spiritual implications.

THEY BEHAVE TYPICALLY AS CHILDREN

Ephesians 4:14 says:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro..."

What are some characteristics of "Children"?

Is it not so that they are usually unsteady, unstable, changeable, ignorant, weak, gullible, complainants -easily influenced by others, given to temptation, led astray, and inconstant in judgment?

Does this describe you who should be strong, stable, and firm in your convictions? Are you likened unto the waves or billows of the sea in that you are one person one day and a totally different person another day? Do you change your personality or mannerisms to fit the crowd with whom you are associating?

THEY ARE WITHOUT SPIRITUAL VISION

Ephesians 4:14 says:

"...and carried about with every wind of doctrine..."

Because they have no settled course for their lives, these believers bounce around from one place to another. They can't seem to find their place in this world. Their **"ship"** seems to be without a helm or anchor.

They are too lazy to take the time to search the Scriptures for themselves. Hence, they are always looking for a **"word"** from someone who may appear spiritual at the time. Their lives are filled with utter confusion and unrest.

THEY ARE EASY PREY FOR DECEIVERS

Ephesians 4:14 says:

"...by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to be deceived."

Their spiritual ignorance makes them an **"easy target"** for the **"cunning craftiness"** of men. Their lack of spiritual discernment makes them an easy prey for the wiles, deceit, trickery, and craftiness of any **"Preacher"** of unrighteousness who appear as **"angels of light"** (**2 Cor. 11:14-15**).

THEY ARE MORE CARNAL THAN BEING SPIRITUAL

1 Corinthians 3:3 says:

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal...?"

What does it mean to be **"carnal"**? It simply means to be yet under the influence of the principles governing the people of the world.

How can we detect if we are **"yet carnal"** or **"worldly"**?

This condition is evidenced by **three main features** - **"envying," "strife,"** and **"divisions."** If you have any of these in your life, you are **"yet carnal"** and walking after the ways of this world and not after Christ. That is lack of spiritual commitment in the brotherhood, especially when there is no forgiveness. Highlighting some areas of where there are lacks of spiritual commitments:

- ❖ Do you feel that you are better than others because of some spiritual advancement, position, or gift?
- ❖ Do you look down on others, feeling that you are superior due to your age, intelligence, talent, abilities, wealth, etc.? Those in such environment – are yet "**babes**" when you should be a "**Giant spiritually.**"
- ❖ Are you always quarreling and contending with others who disagree with your viewpoint?
- ❖ Does it bother you when others don't agree with you? Do you feel that you have to always be right? Then you are full of "**strife**" - yet a "**babe**" when you should be a "**Giant.**"

CONCLUSION

Paul followed the Lord's example of commitment in sacrifice and service. Paul said,

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Total commitment to God means that Jesus is our sole authority, our guiding light, and our unerring compass. Being committed to Christ means being fruitful; it means being a servant. Our axiom is simple and plane:

"For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).