



Women Building Godly Lives

*The wisest of women builds her own house,
but folly with her own hands tears it down. Prov. 14:1*

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Commitment

By Wilburta Arrowood

Commitment is 1. the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc. 2. an engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action.

Short term commitments are a daily portion of life. We decide to make a lunch date with a friend, or a doctor appointment, and we make sure to honor that commitment. But what about long-term commitments? Are we as conscientious about keeping those? Take a look at some decisions I've made in my life.

On the day we married my husband and I both committed to one another. I won't lie. There have been times when it was tough to keep that commitment. We had to grow in so many areas. It took some time to realize love does not conquer all the differences without a some effort. We disagreed on how the money should be handled, how the house should be kept, and even how the children should be disciplined. With love and a good bit of work, all those issues were resolved, but it took commitment. Either of us could have thrown up our hands and said, "I don't want to do this anymore." Fortunately, when we married we both committed to never uttering the word divorce in our dealings with one another. We never have, and with God's help love did conquer all.

I remember as a young mother I drove my children crazy because I would never commit to plans in advance. When asked if we could do a certain activity in the future, my standard answer was, "We'll see." I knew there were times when circumstances could take a drastic change and make keeping a commitment impossible. My

husband and I were foster parents, and we never knew when there would be another child added to the household, or when someone would be ill, etc. Thus, "we'll see" became standard operating procedure. I felt it was important to keep promises. Sometimes the children would wail, "But you promised," because they chose to take my words to mean yes. I had to point out that I knew I had promised to consider it, but I never committed to actually doing it because of the possibility of changed circumstances. That often became a strong teaching point on promises

As foster parents, we made a commitment to provide the best care we were able as long as we had each child. When we started fostering we first took a three-year-old little girl who was profoundly retarded. We spent a great deal of time in physical therapy and practicing at home to teach her to sit up, to hold a spoon, and eventually to walk. None of those things would have happened had we been willy-nilly about working with her. It took long daily sessions to strengthen her muscles and train her brain. With diligence she eventually walked, learned sign language, and conquered some minor household chores.

We see the need for commitment in circumstances such as these, but how often do we give such strong dedication to our service to God? Years before I became a parent, I became a Christian. That was a commitment I did not take lightly. It has now been fifty-eight years since I decided to give my life to God. Once that decision was made and I was baptized, I no longer had to make the decision about whether to attend bible study and worship service each Sunday or Wednesday, even when on vacation. That decision was made the moment I committed

to being a servant of God. I have missed a few services along the way, but only when I was ill, or one of our children was ill. Even then, when we were able, my husband and I alternated attendance. He would go in the morning, and I in the evening. We were both “dedicated to a cause.”

It is important to evaluate the repercussions of each decision we make. Sometimes we commit to things that become impossible, or unwise. Mark 6:17-28 tells of how Herod had John the Baptist beheaded because of a hasty promise he made, and felt compelled to keep his commitment before his guests. What a tragic turn of events because he did not evaluate the repercussions of his promise.

Hebrews 10:23 (ESV) says, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. He will not break his promise of salvation to all those who believe and obey.”

What about you? Are you dedicated to a cause? Do you keep your promises? Does it bother you when you cannot do so? Commitment is serious business, even for a lunch date with a friend. Take time to evaluate your decisions and determine to honor your commitments.



- Later
- Tomorrow
- Today
- NOW**

Commitment to My Spiritual Family

By: Amanda Stephanus

Webster’s Dictionary defines commitment as “the state or an instance of being obligated or emotionally impelled”. There are many commitments to which a person can feel obligated or emotionally impelled. For example, we understand that we are committed to our jobs; we feel an obligation to show up to work every day and do our jobs to the best of our ability. The same can be said for family, personal goals, or sports teams. While some of these might be important, have you ever considered your commitment to your spiritual family? Very briefly, let’s look at 4 areas in which we are to be committed to our spiritual family.

We are commanded to be committed to doing good to our fellow brothers and sisters. Paul tells the Galatians they are to “do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10). This does not mean we half-heartedly look for opportunities to help others or that we wait for an opportunity to arise. Instead, we ought to seek opportunities to help our spiritual family. There is always a brother or sister in need, we just need to open our eyes and ears to be aware of those needs.

Another area we must be committed in is prayer. James tells the Christian that “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much” (James 5:16). We as Christians are righteous and therefore we can pray for our brothers and sisters who are in need. No one else outside of Christ can pray for them and therefore we must be determined to pray for those in need.

We as Christians must also be committed to our spiritual family in matters of restoration. Are we committed to being a sound, faithful Christian who can restore a brother or sister who has been overtaken (Galatians 6:1)? It is important that our commitment to our spiritual family is not hindered by our lack of commitment in spiritual matters.

We also must be committed to working together with our spiritual family. Just as your arms, legs, eyes, etc. work together as one body, we as a spiritual body must be in harmony with

one another. Ephesians 4:16 tells us we should be committed to working together so that we can edify one another and build the body up. Without the edification of our brothers and sisters, we cannot be the spiritual body God desires us to be.

There are many other areas in which we can show our commitment to our spiritual family. I would encourage you in the weeks to evaluate your commitment level and to find ways to show your brothers and sisters that you care for them. A little encouragement goes a long way!



Commitment to Self

By Elizabeth Turner Beall

This title appears to encourage selfishness and the “I-me-mine” philosophy. It really doesn’t. Read on.

When we made our commitment to God and put on Christ in baptism, we rose from those waters a new creature (Romans 6:4). Our life was no longer our own, though we still had control over our words and actions. Matthew 12:36-37 says we will be accountable for every word and deed. Our bodies became God’s temple (I Corinthians 6:19-20), and from that moment until our last breath, we must be careful what we do to and with our bodies. Our commitment to self is our commitment to God.

This commitment includes all areas of life—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. God has to be our center and anchor in order to be a balanced Christian woman.

Physical commitment is an awareness of what makes and maintains healthy bodies for ourselves and our family members. I’m not saying we all should be gourmet chefs, but we do need a knowledge of what will keep us reasonably healthy.

We must also be careful not to harm our bodies with foreign addictive matter (alcohol, drugs, caffeine, nicotine, etc), unhealthy food and drink in kind and quantity, or activity (even non-activity) that might be harmful (laziness, no exercise, adulterous relationships).

Mental purity is what goes into our minds via what we read, hear, or see. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8 to think on things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (ESV). Ladies, this can be a big challenge. This has been one of my struggles for years. It takes strong determination, conscious effort, and prayer to train the mind to think on those things God commanded. Am I one hundred percent? No, and never will be. But I am better, and will continue to work and grow. I go for a while with good, positive thoughts. Then, oops! There’s a thought from somewhere that shouldn’t be in my Christian mind. Do I deal with it or dwell on it? I choose to deal with it, recognize it, confess it, and ask God’s forgiveness and help, to keep my mind where it should be. Paul had similar struggles, which he mentioned in I Corinthians 9:27 and Romans 7:15, that he dealt with, evidently, daily.

Emotional well-being and balance is also an everyday task. Life is not spent only on the mountain-tops, but down in the valleys of challenges. Sometimes life happens so fast we get overwhelmed and off-balance before we have time to think about it. Anger. Illness. Temptation. Death. Natural disasters. Things often hit us one right after the other with no end in sight. Or, they come in groups and you don’t know which one to handle first. Many times I’ve asked “Why do I get this all at once? I can’t seem to get hold of anything and I’m losing the battle.”

Prayer must be the first thing we do, not our last resort. God knows what we need, but He wants us to seek His strength and guidance in prayer and in His Word. He is waiting to help us.

In problem times, Christian sisters need to help each other (Galatians 6:2). One confides as the other listens, then encourages. Both pray together.

Professional help may be needed, and that's not wrong, but please, be very careful in choosing that help. Look for a Christian professional. If that's not possible, then at least find someone who believes in God and biblical principles. Anything less will only add to your problems.

Sometimes medications (prescribed or over-the-counter) help calm us and settle our minds so we can begin to address the problem, but they do not cure or solve anything. Sometimes they only make matters worse, especially if we become dependent on them. The problems are still there and we must confront them, with God's help. Be very careful with pills when seeking emotional balance.

Our spiritual life should be intertwined with the other three areas. If God is our center and anchor, then we are learning daily more about Him through His Word, and going to Him in prayer for thanksgiving, guidance, strength, comfort, and help in all areas of life. If God is left out of even one area, then we are off-balance, off-centered, and out-of-step with God, and life will be harder to bear.

Commitment to self is our commitment to God. It's lifelong and makes our walk to Heaven less troublesome and more hopeful. Let's help each other keep strong commitments to self and to God on our journey. God bless each of you.

Questions for discussion/meditation:

1. How do you feel about commitment?
2. What are your commitments at this moment? List them in order of importance.
3. How many commitments are long-term? Do they cause you stress? If so, why?
4. Will completing short-term commitments ease up the stress in your life?
5. In which of the areas discussed in all of the articles do you have the greatest commitment? Why?
6. How do you exercise your commitment to your spiritual family?

Ideas for applying this study:

1. Look at your commitment list and evaluate them.
 - a. Are they all of equal importance?
 - b. Are your commitments balanced, or are they one-sided (i.e., more at work or with friends than with family, church, and/or God?)

Prayer consideration:

1. Ask for help in keeping/meeting commitments.
2. Ask for wisdom in choosing commitments you may decide to make.



Commitment

U E
I F
I Z I U
B A W G
P K F E F X
Q X A K K A
M H S K U S P B L O V E Q T D L P C B H
C H M N O I T A C I D E D N J T J F G R
E A E K R F P S C L T J E T D L W R
R E S P O N S I B L E M Q N Q D
Q P E W W U H U K J T W R B
F L E S I M O R P I U I
R F M L D M W R E D M H Q C
B A S K Y N G Z I H M L N A
C K M X M I X M U Y J O Z E C U
M Y I I S M U E H C R U H C
Y W V L N Y A I M R E I V E
X G I Y U M E L X U
I R A J D Y N V
O Y V M

CHILD
DEDICATION
PROMISE

CHURCH
FAMILY
RESPONSIBLE

COMMITMENT
LOVE