

**PSALM 25: 4-5 "SHOW ME YOUR WAYS, O LORD" GROUP BIBLE STUDIES –
LEARNER'S PACKET - LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES**

LESSON #5 – GOD'S WAY OF COMMITMENT

GOD'S WAY – Sitting atop the highest hill in Toledo, Spain, is the Alcazar, a 16th-century fortress. In the civil war of the 1930s, the Alcazar became a battleground. During one dramatic episode of the war, the fortress leader received a phone call. It was from his son, who had been captured. The ultimatum: If the father didn't surrender the Alcazar to them, they would kill him. The father weighed his options. After a long pause and with a heavy heart, he said to his son, "Then die like a man." That was commitment. This study, God's Way Of Commitment is designed to encourage faithfulness.

THE PRAYER -.Let's begin with prayer. Dear Lord Jesus, all too often Christianity seems to be less a matter of commitment and more a matter of convenience. We repent of those times when we have postponed, shirked and passed on being committed Christians. Let us see the value of faithfully working at the things You have entrusted to us. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

THE WORLD'S WAY – Last year I was at a high school basketball game. It was a great game that went into overtime. As a pastor who has a set time limit on his worship service, I was surprised that nobody looked at their watch. On the contrary, the crowd seemed to relish the fact the game was going on longer than anticipated. When the game went into double overtime, I stood up, knowing full well, from my church experience, that people would be running to be first at the door. It didn't happen. The crowd stayed, and cheered in a way that brought shame to my congregation's Easter singing. Can you believe the game went into TRIPLE overtime? I expected to see a petition being passed by the fans because they were upset at how long they had been kept sitting. Nothing could be further from the truth. Everybody, and I mean everybody, focused on the court activity. The results of that game seemed to be matter of life and death. And every single person was committed to staying.

THOUGHT: The church is the only place in the world where you can become a member, show up half the time, and when you do show up you are allowed to get upset when somebody asks, "Where have you been?" Look up the passage and answer the questions placed before you:

SCRIPTURE SEARCH 1 –

PASSAGE	QUESTION	ANSWER
Numbers 13: 1, 6	Who are we talking about? What was his job?	_____
Numbers 13: 27	What was the good news?	_____
Numbers 13: 28	What was the bad news?	_____
Numbers 13: 30	What was the minority opinion?	_____
Numbers 14: 21-23	What was God's judgment?	_____
Numbers 14: 24	What was God's promise?	_____
Numbers 14: 32-33	How long would it take for Caleb to get the land?	_____
Joshua 14: 12	40+ years later Caleb made his claim. What did he want?	_____

FIRST APPLICATION:

Commitment means doing what you said you would do. It means you keep your _____. If you promised the Lord that you would give Him the glory, commitment means you keep on doing that whether you're reduced to nothing or exalted to the highest position on earth.

Of course, people don't always do that. That is why Scripture tells, and warns God's people to be committed. Look at these passages and see what they say:

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2. SCRIPTURE SEARCH - THE WAY OF GOD IS GOOD AND BEST

PASSAGE	QUESTION	ANSWER
Matthew 24: 10-11	According to Jesus what will happen?	_____
Matthew 24: 13	What should His people do?	_____
Mark 13: 13a	What will happen to the Lord's followers?	_____
Mark 13: 13b	What should they do?	_____
2 Timothy 2: 10a	What are we to endure?	_____
2 Timothy 2: 10b	For what purpose?	_____
Hebrews 12: 7a	What are we supposed to endure?	_____
Hebrews 12: 7b	Why should we endure hardship?	_____

THOUGHT & ILLUSTRATION: - All of our texts point out one thing: the Lord expects faithful commitment from His people. Talk to your pastor and ask him:

Do you have a pretty good idea if parents are going to bring their children to church after baptism?

___ Yes ___ No What clues do you use? _____

Do you have a good idea if a confirmand is going to keep the promise of being faithful unto death.

___ Yes ___ No What helps you figure it out? _____

Do you have a good idea if a couple married in the church is going to stay in the church?

___ Yes ___ No What makes the difference? _____

Faithfulness is all ultimately based on whether people have truly seen Jesus Christ and the great sacrifice He has made for them. We're not talking about a passing glance, or a moments peek. We're talking about seeing God's Son upon the cross and realizing that pain being endured was for them. We're talking about hearing the words, "Father, forgive them", and know the Lord was thinking of _____. We're talking about seeing God's commitment to us. That kind of vision makes all the difference.

Clarence Francis, who was chairman of the board of General Foods Corporation, said: "You can buy a man's time; you can even buy a man's physical presence at a given place; you can even buy a measured number of skilled muscular motions per hour or day. But you cannot buy enthusiasm; you cannot buy initiative; you cannot buy loyalty; you cannot buy devotion of hearts, minds and souls. You have to earn these things." I pray it strikes you, as it strikes me, that the Lord and Savior has earned our _____, the _____ of hearts, minds and souls. He has done so by His way of Commitment.

THE WAY OF PRAYER – Our final prayer comes from Thomas Aquinas: "Give me, O Lord, a steadfast heart, which no unworthy affection may drag downwards; give me an unconquered heart, which no tribulation can wear out; give me an upright heart, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside." In Jesus' Name. Amen.