

## 1 Peter 2:21-25, Part D

1Pe 2:21 (NKJV) **For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: <sup>22</sup> "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; <sup>23</sup> who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.**

It is important before leaving v23 to have a meaningful appreciation of why it is important for a believer to be willing to commit himself or herself to the Father. The word “commitment” is not actually used in the New Testament, but the verb form of the noun is used over 60 times. However, the specific Greek word for “**commit**” that is used in [1 Peter 2:23](#) comes from a different verb form. It is the verb “*paradidomai*” and it is an intensive word which technically carries the specific idea of intentionally doing something – of delivering over, of giving away, and in this passage of committing our self to someone else. In a courtroom setting, the word was used of delivering up a prisoner. In the Old Testament, the primary use of the word was when God would deliver an enemy into the hands of Israel, or because of their disobedience, He would deliver Israel into their enemy’s hand. Of the over 120 times that the Greek word “*paradidomai*” is used in the New Testament, [1 Peter 2:23](#) is the only place where it is actually translated as “**committed**”. So, the primary way the word is translated is to be delivered over to someone or to be betrayed by someone. Most of the passages that use this word refer to Jesus being betrayed and delivered into the hands of the high priests and scribes, and ultimately to crucifixion. In some cases it refers to being delivered over to the sinful desires of the heart. For instance, [Romans 1:24, 26, 28](#) says,

Ro 1:24 (NKJV) **Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,**

Ro 1:26 (NKJV) **For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.**

Ro 1:28 (NKJV) **And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;**

[Ephesians 4:19](#) says,

Eph 4:19 (NKJV) **who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.**

Speaking of Christ, [Galatians 2:20](#) says,

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

[Romans 8:32](#), speaking of what God the Father did in Christ, says,

Ro 8:32 (NKJV) **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He**

**not with Him also freely give us all things?**

[Ephesians 5:25](#), speaking of the church, says,

**Eph 5:25 (NKJV) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,**

Of all of the various translations for [1 Peter 2:23](#), I personally like the NASB which says that Christ “**kept entrusting Himself...**” The ESV says “**continued entrusting**”. Because this word is in the imperfect tense, what it means is that the action is progressive. I.e., it was something that Jesus did in the past, and it is something that He continued to do all of His life. Technically, it means that it is a linear action, or a continuous action that is rooted in a decision in the past. It is the idea that He entrusted Himself to His Father in the past, and because of that decision that He kept on entrusting Himself to His Father. There was never a time when He did not entrust Himself to His Father. In the same manner that lost people would give themselves over to lewdness and lasciviousness, Christ gave Himself over to righteousness and to the perfect will of His Father for His life. This was something that for Him was intentional and deliberate. His being fully committed to His Father was not something that was accidental or unplanned, but to the contrary it was intended and very purposeful. That is what the imperfect tense is communicating to us.

If I can say it another way, becoming a godly believer is not an accident. Living a godly life is not something that just happens. Godly men and women make very deliberate, thoughtful, and careful decisions. What they decide to do and how they decide to live is done with great purpose and planning. They measure out their decisions, they weigh out their decisions. They are very intentional in deciding what is going to govern and control their life and that to which they are going to give themselves. They make the will of God and the glory of God the priority of their life. Notice that I did not say that they make the will of God “a” priority of their life. One of the very fallacious and misleading paradigms of the Christian life is that a believer is perfectly okay just allowing the glory of God and the will of God to be what one may call a “meaningful part” of their life. Paul summarized his perspective on this when he boldly declared in [Philippians 1:21](#),

**Php 1:21 (NKJV) For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**

The verbal infinitive “**to live**” in that verse is in the present tense, active voice which simply means that for Paul Christ was Who he was always living for, but because it is in the active voice, He fully understood that it was something that He had to be very purposeful and deliberate about in His life. As stated before, a godly life is never an accident – never. When you meet a godly man or woman, the godliness that you see in their life is not a coincidence or a spiritual quirk, it is not something that has just happened by chance – never. It is always something that involved their committing and entrusting their life, their decisions, their goals, their time, their resources, and their mind and heart to the will and purposes of God for their life. At every turn the godly believer is making godly decisions, he is engaged in godly disciplines that make the most of his time, and he is always actively pursuing godly goals. When he fails in his life, he is convicted and challenged, and he immediately charts out a path that is going to get him back on track again. If I can say it another way, the godly man or woman is always intentionally living for Christ no matter their circumstances, no matter their schedules, and no matter the struggles that may be confronting their life. No matter what part of life is bearing down on them, Christ

is always their life, and His perfect will for their life is their target.

I do not mean to be arrogant in this evaluation, but I have never met someone that God was using to glorify and honor Him that was casual, haphazard, and unintentional about their Christian life – never, not one single time. I have said that often, but it is true. The unfortunate scenario that seems to be much more normative in our Christian culture is that rather than growing in their Christian life, rather than giving themselves over to Christ, and rather than being someone that God is using, believers seem to be comfortable with being halfhearted, almost indifferent, and casual in their Christian life. In the American culture, many believers are much more fascinated and captivated by the entertainment side of Christianity than the commitment side. The honor and glory of Christ is not something that consumes them, but something that eludes them. It is something that over a period of time they have learned to live without and not pursue. Too often it is our personal life that consumes us and not His life. What does that say about that person and where does it leave them? I do not know. From a pastoral perspective and even an exegetical perspective, it is impossible to quantify what is lost when someone either knowingly chooses not to really commit themselves and their life to God. What we do know, and we have studied and taught this very often, is that they lose something that is much more valuable than what they may gain in their decision not to yield themselves fully to their Father. That is an undeniable spiritual reality.

The biblical goal and objective is simple – it is to constantly give ourselves over to our heavenly Father and to His sovereign care, and to constantly entrust our life into His hands. That was the overriding goal of Christ, and it has to become our goal as well. It is not something that is easy and I would never desire to give that impression. So, if someone ever tries to convince you that living the Christian life is easy, they are gravely mistaken. I see nothing in the life of Christ, or in the life of His disciples that was easy. So, how does this idea of entrusting our life to our Father take place? How does a believer actually yield, commit, and entrust their life to their heavenly Father? How did Christ do it, how did Paul do it, and how do we do it?

Well, first of all, we have to appreciate that the Bible does not give spiritual formulas. They simply do not exist. What the Scriptures do is they provide principles that we as believers are called on to integrate into our life. A part of that is our personal responsibility to understand what has to be done and then to figure out how to work a biblical principle into our life. What we know from Scripture is that our life must be based on a deep and intimate knowledge of God's Word. This is so basic and so elementary to our mindset that it should be something that is so innately woven into our mind and heart that we do not actually think about it. I.e., we just do it. The believer who has a greater and more intimate knowledge of the Word of God will also have a much deeper commitment to that Word. No one can maintain a deep and abiding commitment to and conviction of the Word of God apart from an in-depth knowledge of that Word.

However, the cornerstone commitment of the believer's life must be to God Himself. Listen to the classic statement of this in [Matthew 22:37-38](#),

**Mt 22:37 (NKJV) Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment.**

In every part of our life, in every aspect of our life we must be fully committed to loving God with all of

our heart, soul, and mind. Every part of our being must be committed to making both God and His will as the priority of our life. This commitment comes before our commitment to anything else, even to our families. For instance, [Luke 14:26-27](#) says,

**Lk 14:26 (NKJV) "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. <sup>27</sup> And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.**

When I read verses like this and understand what they mean, I fully recognize that in reality that they are a kind of spiritual warning to the person who is not taking their Christian life seriously. No matter how you may personally exegete this verse, it is not a verse that we can escape relative to making Christ the ultimate priority of our life. I cannot really be a valid and compelling disciple of Christ if verses like this are not a part of how I perceive the Christian life. I can be a good church-goer, I can teach a Sunday School class, I can give money to the church, I can be an AWANA teacher, I can pastor a church, and I can go on a mission trip, but anyone can do all of those and still not be fully committed to will of God for their life. In many instances, they simply become a subtle substitute for actually being fully committed to Christ. Peter has already warned us that suffering because of our faith may very well be a normal part of a deeply committed Christian life. In fact, Peter uses a form of the word “**suffer**” more than any other New Testament writer does, and almost as much as all four gospels combined. So, for Peter the trials, the struggles, and the spiritual difficulties are simply a normal part of a committed Christian life. Listen to what John McArthur once said about “commitment”. He said,

*“The Christian life is not adding Jesus to one's own way of life, but renouncing that personal way of life for His and being willing to pay whatever cost that may require.”*

Whenever we read through the gospels, it becomes vividly clear that everytime that Jesus addressed spiritual issues that the number of people who decided to stay for the remainder of the message quickly diminished. It was Jesus’ call for their undivided commitment to Him that was constantly thinning out the ranks of those He would even consider to be legitimate disciples. What the committed Christian has learned through personal experience is that everytime that they actually lose something because of yielding themselves to the will of God that they actually gain something much greater. God never removes something out of our life without replacing it with something much better.

Listen very carefully. Whatever it is that you are committed to is what defines you. Whatever it is that you are committed to is what actually controls your life. What you are committed to is what demands your time and your resources. It is what demands your priorities. It is what demands your attention. There is no escaping this reality. Jesus was fully committed to His Father’s will. In [John 5:30](#) Jesus said,

**Jn 5:30 (NKJV) I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.**

All that a believer has to do is to look at what they are really and truly committed to in order to see exactly where their life is headed, and eventually how much or how little God may actually be able to use them.

It seems that the real measure of commitment in the Christian life can often be measured in the degree

or lack thereof of Christlikeness that is seen in a believer's life. Whenever you see someone who is very Christlike in their life, that is someone who has given the Holy Spirit a greenlight to work in them, and He has done exactly that. I absolutely love what Kay Arthur said one time. She said,

*“If you have no intention of letting Christ rule your life, then forget Christianity; it is not for you.”*

I love that. I love the depth and wisdom of that simple, yet very bold declaration of what the Christian life is really all about. It is critical to appreciate and understand that nothing is going to shape and form your life any more than the commitments you choose to make regarding your life. For instance, as husbands, [Ephesians 5](#) says that we are to choose to love our wife as Christ loved the church. That one choice and that one commitment will not only shape a husband's life, but it will shape the life of his wife and of his children. For me as a pastor, it will shape the integrity of my spiritual calling. Let me state it another way that I think helps define this idea of committing ourselves to our heavenly Father. Our commitment and devotion to the Christian life is the spiritual act of living out what we say we believe. [Psalm 37:3-5](#) is one of my favorite passages in the Psalms.

**Ps 37:3 (NKJV) Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.**

**<sup>4</sup> Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. <sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.**

One of the obvious things that our passage in [1 Peter 2](#) is teaching is simple – it is that our commitment in the face of adversity and conflict is what develops the character of Christ within us. However, if the character of Christ and the entrusting of our life to our Father is not one of the primary goals of our Christian life, then the trials will only reveal the real lack of commitment that we actually have to Christ.