

## Meaning and Synonyms

1. Promise
2. Vow
3. Pledge
4. Assurance
5. Binder
6. Dedication
7. Obligation
8. Covenant

## Commitment is a mutual promise

It is a mutual agreement between God and man. Commitment is like a bilateral, binding contract, which has to be respected by both parties.

### I. From God's side

God is faithful and can not change his promise or his character. He is immutable, unchangeable and fixed. That is why we call him the "Rock of ages". It is written, 'If we deny him, He will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful; He can not deny Himself' (2 Timothy 2:12, 13)

**God is faithful in his promises to accept 100% the prayers of the repentant persons.** He said, "The one who comes to me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37). He promised to give rest to all those who labour and are heavy laden who come to him (Matt 11:28).

The Lord fulfilled his promises and accepted **Zacchaeus**, the **Samaritan woman** who was married to five husbands, **Mary Magdalene** who was possessed with seven demons, the tax collector who prayed a few words in humility and a contrite heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner, and he went down to his house justified" Luke(18:13)

**The Lord kept his promise even to the point of death on the cross** when he accepted the repentant thief and said to him, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43)

**Also the Lord promised to listen to our prayers, especially when they agree with his good will;** "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (1 John 5:14; Matt 7:7-11)

**Christ gives us many encouraging promises**, someone once called them, A check book on the bank of faith: He said "if you abide in me and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7)

**God's commitment to us is very strong; it starts from the beginning of our lives and lasts till the end.** He says, "Listen to Me... who have been upheld by me from birth; Who have been carried from the womb; Even to your old age I am He; and even to grey hairs I will carry you" (Isa 46:3,4). He assures us more than that saying, "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from you nor shall my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has mercy on you: (Isa 54:10)

**The Lord's promises, vows, assurance and obligations cover all the details of our lives as His children.** From the negative viewpoint He says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). And from the positive point He says, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:30).

**God wanted to give His people the assurance of the truthfulness of His promises about our salvation, acceptance, adoption and inheritance; He supported His promises with an oath!**

St. Paul explained this fact to us in his letter to the Hebrews saying; "For when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you and multiply you. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation" (Heb. 6: 13-18).

**Moreover, what is so strange and unimaginable, that God has proved His commitment and covenant by His own blood.** He sealed His promises with His blood. In ancient times, people used to confirm their covenants with the blood of a sacrifice. God said, "Gather My saints together to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice" (Psalm 50:5; see also Gen. 15:8-12 & Exod. 24). The Lord Jesus Christ used the same measurement 'when He established the Sacrament of the Last Supper and said,

"Drink of it all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27, 28).

## II. The Commitment from Our Side

### Shortcomings in our commitment:

#### 1. Lack of Commitment:

Some people have no commitment at all towards God. They don't even think of Him or know Him; even though it is a matter of life and death, eternal life or eternal death in hell. They forgot their Creator, Saviour and redeemer. They are committed to everything else except God.

#### 2. Partial Commitment:

Others have part-time commitment; they go to church on major feasts or some Sundays at their convenience depending on the weather, mood or circumstances, at their convenience. They give priority to all sorts of entertainment, sports and shopping! The same is said about their commitment to reading the Bible or praying.

#### 3. No Follow-up Commitment:

Some people get touched or inflamed by a sermon; they earnestly offer God many vows, but after a while, they forget about them and find themselves swallowed by the world. Spiritual life needs steadfastness, patience, perseve-rance, firmness, insistence, determination and completion to the end. There should be a clear goal, before our sight. It deserves all' kinds .of sacrifice to reach that goal. The Lord Jesus did not turn away from His goal to save us until He said on the cross, "It is

finished." He said, "He who endures to the end shall be saved" (Mark 13:13). He also said, "Be faithful until death, and I will give YOU the crown of life" (Rev 2:10). In the same regard, St. Paul says, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin" (Heb. 12: 1-4). He also said, "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phi1.3: 14). Therefore, we have to start right and persevere to the end in God's way and will till we reach heaven.

H.H. Pope Shenouda used to say, "Go forward in your spiritual life with God, do not stop but advance, run fast- forward. If you could not run, then walk, and if you could not walk, then creep, but don't quit or else you will backslide." So, commitment requires following-up, never looking back as Lot's wife did (Luke 17:23), never giving up, never being discouraged or despairing.

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## Commitment

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