

Fully Committed

BELIEVERS ARE TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY
A WHOLEHEARTED COMMITMENT TO GOD

Deuteronomy 30:11-20

11 “This command **A** that I give you today is certainly **not too difficult** **B** or beyond your reach. **12** It is **not in heaven** **C** so that you have to ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?’ **13** And it is not **across the sea** **D** so that you have to ask, ‘Who will cross the sea, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?’ **14** But the message is **very near you**, **E** in your mouth and **in your heart**, **F** so that you may follow it. **15** See, today I have **set before you** **G** life and prosperity, death and adversity. **16** For I am commanding you today to **love the LORD your God**, **H** to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, statutes, and ordinances, so that you may live and multiply, and the LORD your God may **bless you** **I** in the land you are entering to possess. **17** But if your heart turns away and you do not listen and you are led astray to bow in worship to other gods and serve them, **18** I tell you today that you will **certainly perish** **J** and will not prolong your days in the land you are entering to possess across the Jordan. **19** I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, **20** love the LORD your God, obey him, and remain faithful to him. For **he is your life**, **K** and he will prolong your days as you live in the land the LORD swore to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Exploring Key Words

- A** While stated in the singular, the phrase refers to the entirety of God’s covenant demands.
- B** Obeying God’s law is not easy, but it also is not reserved for a privileged few. All those in a covenant relationship with Him can understand and obey His instructions.
- C** Moses’s first metaphor described accessibility to God’s law. The Lord did not keep His instructions out of reach or impossible to grasp.
- D** Moses’s second metaphor emphasized that God’s law does not require great effort to obtain. Essentially, the ancient Israelites were land dwellers. So, for them, placing God’s law across the sea made it virtually impossible to retrieve.
- E** The accessibility of God’s Word means that His people knew how to respond to His moral requirements. That response would make Israel distinctive and visible to others (Deut. 4:7).
- F** To have God’s Word “in your heart” is to know and embrace it internally, not merely by rote. It should affect our actions (Deut. 6:5; 11:18).
- G** The older generation had a choice set before them, and they chose death. This generation would need to continue choosing life through obedience and loyalty to God (Josh. 24:15).
- H** We express our love for the Lord by two actions: “walk in his ways” and “keep his commands.”
- I** In Deuteronomy, “blessing” is a catch-all term for all the good things God pours into His people.
- J** The Hebrew states the truth emphatically. Rebelling against God would have devastating consequences for Israel.
- K** Life is not found in the law, but in the God who gives and sustains it. Apart from Him, there is no life. Jesus made the same claim (John 14:6).



The Command (Deut. 30:11-14)

- Moses encouraged the Israelites to pledge themselves anew to God as His chosen people (Deut. 29:9-13).
- He reminded them that keeping up their end of the covenant with God was not too difficult for them. God's commands were to be in their hearts.

The Commitment (Deut. 30:15-18)

- Moses urged the people to choose a life of blessing.
- They were to love God and walk in His ways. By doing so, God would bless them in the promised land.
- Turning away from God and worshiping other gods would lead to judgment. Their days in Canaan would be cut short.

The Challenge (Deut. 30:19-20)

- Moses instructed the Israelites to choose life so that their descendants would also live to love and honor God faithfully. God would prolong their days in the land He promised to give them.

Summary Statements

Believers are to be characterized by a wholehearted commitment to God.

- We can trust God to give us the ability to obey His commands.
- People must choose whether they will follow God or not.
- Our desire to follow God influences our descendants' choices to follow Him.

Memory Verse

Deuteronomy 30:16

Key Doctrine

Man

By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. (See Genesis 3:6-7; James 1:14-15.)

ENGAGE

In what situation have you had so many options that it was overwhelming to pick only one? How did you eventually decide? (PSG, p. 109)

- Do you remember when people would sit for a professional family photo? Afterward, somebody had to decide which photo was best. It would be framed and proudly displayed.
- One of the best ways to pick the favorite is to not consider multiple options at once. Instead, look at only two. Of these two, which is better? Place a new picture beside the chosen one and ask, which is better?
- By comparing only two at a time, you eliminate choice fatigue. Eventually, you've chosen the best photo.

Bonus: What's the best choice you've made in the last six months? What choice would you take back?

EXPLORE

1. THE COMMAND (DEUT. 30:11-14)

If people think God's truths are confusing and unattainable, how might that affect their openness to God's Word? (PSG, p. 112)

- In Deuteronomy, God repeatedly called His people to keep His commands. Here, He made it clear that such obedience was not "too difficult" or attainable only through superhuman effort. It remains a doable task.
- If the Israelites wanted to know God's commands, they didn't have to send someone to "heaven" or "across the sea." They didn't need to take extreme journeys or be theological experts. Rather than being remote and unattainable, God's "message" was near.
- Having His message in one's "heart" means weaving it into every area of our being so that it transforms us. Having the message in one's "mouth" means articulating God's words to others.

How can you respond to people who say it is too difficult to know God's will or to obey His commands? (PSG, p. 112)

2. THE COMMITMENT (DEUT. 30:15-18)

Bonus: How has following God changed you for the better? How has straying from Him caused pain?

- In Hebrew thought, "prosperity" was not limited to finances. It also referred to living joyfully. In contrast, "adversity" related to experiences that were evil or hurtful.
- Moses highlighted three benefits of following God. His people would live in the land, multiply in the land, and be blessed in the land. This was the life and the prosperity mentioned in verse 15. This was a far cry from the earlier generation that lived as slaves in Egypt and missed God's prosperity because of disobedience.

- Verse 17 describes a negative progression into sin. The first step begins in the heart, maybe unseen by others. Second, people stop listening to God's instructions and commands. Finally, they are "led astray."
- Usually, this drift involves incremental movement rather than a massive leap. But the consequences are devastating: "You will certainly perish."

How are people today fooled into thinking there is no penalty for sin? (PSG, p. 115)

3. THE CHALLENGE (DEUT. 30:19-20)

Bonus: Who would you call as a character witness in court? What would that person say about you?

- As if in a courtroom, God called "heaven and earth" as witnesses against Israel. No human or heavenly being could deny that God gave His people ample opportunity to choose Him. And the time to choose was "today."
- The options were life/blessing and death/curses. The decision made that day would affect them and subsequent generations of Israelites. It was more than a mental assent. It had to be a total life commitment.
- Moses went on to emphasize that God was Israel's "life." They were His people. He had called them, and He had led them. Apart from Him, they would not exist, much less enjoy the blessings of His promises. The decision faced by Israel is the same decision faced by every person today.

What does it mean for you to say God "is your life"? In this context, what does it mean for you to "choose life"? (PSG, p. 116)

CHALLENGE

As a group, talk about the practical benefits of studying God's Word.

How can your Bible study group help people with little Bible knowledge to better understand God's Word? (PSG, p. 117)

Take time to examine your life for areas where you might be drifting away from God, even incrementally.

Do you sense you are not as close to God as you once were? What changes will you make this week to renew your commitment to God? (PSG, p. 117)

FURTHER DISCUSSION



Scan here for additional discussion questions for this week's study.

BIBLE SKILL (P. 116, PSG)

Read multiple Bible passages to understand a biblical concept.

Read Deuteronomy 30:19-20; 32:46-47; John 17:3; and Colossians 3:1-4. Reflect on what it means that God is our life. ***Practically speaking, what does that look like? How does the truth these verses communicate challenge you to adjust your priorities?***

Direct adults to complete the Bible Skill activity (PSG, p. 116). Lead a discussion about how the verses compare. Guide the group through the questions in the activity. Challenge them to identify steps they can take toward a deeper commitment during the week. Remind them that good intentions are not enough when it comes to obedience. Say: *God longs for His people to act with devotion and full commitment toward Him.*

OBJECT LESSON: SNACKS

Display a bowl of bite-sized, individual pieces of candy or snacks, along with a separate bowl of kibble dog food. Pass the bowls and invite adults to select a snack from one bowl or the other.

Comment that this choice seems easy enough. Ask: ***Why doesn't the choice between the options in verses 15-16 and verses 17-18 seem just as easy? Why would anyone follow false gods instead of obeying the Lord?***

Affirm that false gods can take many different forms in our lives, but we have to take intentional steps to rid them from our lives. Allow adults a few minutes for silent prayer. Encourage them to perform a ruthless evaluation of their lives that identifies and seeks forgiveness for the gods that keep them from being fully devoted to the Lord.

CHOOSING GOD'S WAY

This passage reminds God's people that His Word is accessible, understandable, and doable (Deut. 30:11-14). It also presents an open choice to choose between the way of life and the way of death (vv. 15-20). One finds genuine satisfaction and purpose in a life of faithfulness to God, following His ways and obeying His commands (v. 16). But how can the command to surrender to God be considered "life?"

Moses emphasized that true life is found only in God. Without Him, there is no life (John 10:10; 1 John 5:11-12). Jesus said the same thing about Himself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

Some may suggest that following the Lord's rules is too legalistic and difficult, that God deliberately made the law so demanding that no one would ever live up to it. This is a distorted belief that denigrates God's law. In the Old Testament, living a life that pleased God was not only possible, but it was the expectation.

Various psalmists claimed that they lived according to God's law, and those claims were neither exaggerated nor exceptional. Ordinary people could live in a way that pleases God by living according to His law (Ps. 18:21). The fact that the saints of old could do so brought them great joy and delight.

The claim of living faithfully before God was not a self-righteous attitude or a claim to sinless perfection (Ps. 51:1-4). But God's law provided the message of grace, forgiveness, and cleansing. Obeying God's law was never a means for achieving salvation. Instead, it represented the right response to a salvation that one has already received. It does not *define* salvation, but it does *demonstrate* salvation.

God communicates His will through His Word, and no one wants people to know and understand God's will more than He does. His teaching is not obscure or difficult to understand. Deuteronomy 30 affirms that God's law can indeed be kept. His people can, as the prophet Micah noted, follow God's commands "to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Mic. 6:8). Someone who lives this way demonstrates a life of faithfulness to God.

God's people are people of principle, not simply a bunch of rule followers. The life and conduct of a "righteous" person will demonstrate faithfulness to God flowing from the heart and going beyond mere actions. If someone is not living in holiness, it shows that something is wrong.