Commitment: The joys of committing to something in particular

Defining Commitment

To commit is to bind oneself to something for a purpose.

- Related words: dedication, fidelity, faithfulness, loyalty, devotion, attachment, and covenant.
- **Imagine** being **yoked together** with something **and pulling** towards some greater **goal**.
- This type of **relationship** will require a **deep level of understanding** and **reciprocity** that will **shape and change** both parties.

Committing is deciding to be in a particular place, doing some particular work, for particular people, in line with a particular understanding of what is good and what is not.

Major Commitments

1. What will I do? (My Work)
2. Where will I live? (My place)
3. Who will I live with? (My People)
4. Who/what will I follow? (My Faith or Philosophy)

We all **need a primary commitment** that **guides and directs** how we use our time. **This primary commitment tells us where we will find meaning and joy and fulfillment.**

Characteristics of commitment

Limitations & Particulars

Commitment necessitates something particular for us to bind ourselves to. If we are to commit, we must accept our own limitations and those of the particular *something* we bind ourselves to.

Hope

A hope for some future good is what draws us into commitment. We are not the first to make commitments. We ust remain in the struggle long enough to see the good fruit.

Time

Committing becomes a means of cultivating our time in order to generate good consequences.

Context for Commitment

1. From meaning discovered to meaning created
2. From identity given to identity created
3. From external authority to internal authority
4. From outwardly-directed commitments to inwardly-directed commitments

- The difference is in where we believe **authority** and **ultimate reality** to reside and therefore what needs to accommodate what. Where do I derive my standards for what is good and true and beautiful?
- From: Your self will be 'true' when it aligns to something outside ourselves
  To: your 'true' self can only be found when what is outside you aligns to what is inside
- Our **primary commitment and our guiding commitment is to ourselves**, and all subsequent commitments are contingent upon who we believe ourselves to be

Challenges of Commitment

1. The Paralysis of Choice
2. The fear of regret & failure
3. The fear of attachment

We are paralyzed by choice and unable to move forward because we are terrified we'll make the wrong choice. Even when we do form attachments and make commitments, we are left with the constant need to curate those commitments to ensure they represent us accurately.

Joys of commitment

Purpose & Order
Binding ourselves to something for a purpose may impose limits, but it also gives order and direction.

Depth & Competence
The way of commitment feeds on time and energy, but offers depth and competence in return.

Opportunities
As we become able to respond, we will be given opportunities of greater importance and consequence.

Belonging
Commitments bind us to things outside ourselves and give us more opportunities to belong.

Accountability
The joy of accountability is received when we choose to submit ourselves to the people and standards inherent to our commitments and we learn the difference between what is good and what is not.

Contentment
Accepting our limitations and learning to do the best you can in your particular situation. Knowing that you are not responsible for everything, because you are responsible for something.

Example of Commitment: God

We are the object of his commitment and our good is his purpose. God has bound himself to us for the purpose of redeeming us and restoring his creation.

'Yahweh, Yahweh, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and overflowing with loyal-love and faithfulness.'

In Christ we have the prime example of what it looks like to give our lives away, but also a demonstration of the future good that we can hope to share in.

Commitment as Apprenticeship

1. Follow a person instead of principles
2. Make yourself accountable to that person
3. Become like that person

Find a master and **you will see principles put into practice**. Lay your best effort before them and open yourself to caring correction and encouragement. If you do this, you will become like them. So be careful who you choose

‘*Consider the possibility that we are the ones committed to, the objects of an infinite commitment, and that the commitment is to redeem us and bring us home.’*

- *David Brooks, The Second Mountain*