

Theme: -Commitment- looks for the best interest of the other -expenditure  
- Perseverance  
-Find a way

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July 18, 2010

Through Thick and Thin

Mark 2:1-4

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Pastor Stephanie told me today was going to be about commitment, renewing the vows we make to be committed to those people and ideals that are important to us. So I selected passage that more than stems around the commitment we make as friends towards one another. But if you think about it a friend can be a person with whom we hang around, or it can be more than that like our spouse or children or maybe even parents. However you picture this passage consider all the people in your live as a friend.

Here is what I think about commitment: it first off looks out for the best interest of the other. Needless to say the paralytic couldn't walk by themselves to get to Jesus for healing so the friends look out for the best interest of the paralytic and carry him (or her) to Jesus. Two weeks ago I invited you to do a good work for Jesus that might be looking out for the best interest of a friend. Think about the times someone has come to your aid and how good that felt that someone had your back. We can produce that same feeling in others by being a friend with their best interest in mind. Commitment has an attitude of expenditure. I am willing to give up that which is mine, that which is important to me, for you? In this passage we see four friends expending energy to carry a friend to see Jesus.

Commitment has an attitude of perseverance. With the house full of people spilling out the door, there was no way the friends were going to get the paralytic in to see Jesus. They could have easily packed up and went on home. Unless they persevered; that is looked for another way to bring wholeness to this life. Relationships call more often than we might expect for us to preserve, to look for another way to bring restoration, peace and wholeness. If I were to make one comment about life in America it would be how easily we dump relationships rather than persevere through relationships. Years ago if you worked for company you knew they would do their best for you, not so today. I recently heard of a young lady who "held down the fort" while the snow birds were gone for the winter only to have her position terminated when the snow bird came back to roost. Even companies don't persevere for their employees. The best relationships are those whose parties are willing to preserve through the difficulties of life.

Commitment finds a way, for the paralytic it was cutting a hole in the roof. For us it will likely be something vastly different. Commitment means you keep trying; you keep looking for a solution to the problem. When I counsel married couples I usually hear of some sort of negative pattern that keeps repeating itself. I tend to make the comment that this spiral of negative behavior is what is dragging your relationship down. How to break that spiral is the big question, trying this or that might work. What I have done in their relationship is to look for another way to get the paralytic to Jesus.

If today is commitment Sunday, to whom or to what are you committed? Are you willing to commit the necessary resources to make these relationships the best they can be? Are you

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willing to persevere even when it looks futile to continue on? Are you willing to try another way even if it seems like you have tried every way possible? Commitment is trying again, it's continuing on and it more often than not costs us something. Yet commitment is one of the most healthful acts we can do for ourselves and for others. Today is commitment Sunday; consider renewing your commitments today. Your commitment to God, to your spouse, to your friends, to your work, to an idea or whatever you believe God is calling to you. Commitment it is a big deal.