

Introduction: Pg. \_\_\_\_\_

- Soccer Nights: Celebrate.
- SummerLinkers: Gratitude!
- Songs of Jesus: **Keller (recommend) - slide**

## “True & Greater Commitment” Psalm 40

When I was in middle school, going into high school, I started reading the Bible for myself and more carefully listening to sermons in my church and I began to hear verses I felt like I had never heard before.

- Luke 9:23-24 - Quote
- Luke 9:62 - Quote
- Luke 14:33 - Quote

Today, we are going to dive into Psalm 40, asking the question, how can we obtain a true & greater commitment to God?

If someone were to study your life over the next month, and examined how you spent your time, where you went, the money you spent, the topics of your conversation, what conclusions would they draw about your level of commitment?

Culture of Noncommitment... keep our options open. It's no big deal to commit and then decommit.

What would it look like to . . .

**The Point: Live with an unrestrained and contagious commitment to God.**

I want to give you three keys to living with a true and greater commitment.

**I. Let your commitment flow from God's commitment to you.**

The first thing David does in this Psalm is...

**Look back at God's past grace on your behalf. (1-3)**

- Verse 1 reads like this: “I waited and waited and waited.”
- That's life in our broken world. Waiting. Waiting for a professional breakthrough. Waiting. Waiting for a spouse. Waiting for healing. Waiting for that trial to end. Waiting to be freed from the sin you can't seem to shake. Waiting.
- Do you ever feel like that?
  - David says his time of waiting felt like he was in a pit that was going to destroy him. A pit often alluded to a near death experience. He also describes it as a miry bog that left him trapped with little hope of escaping.
  - We don't know exactly what this pit was for David. Clearly, he had adversaries. Clearly, he had his own personal struggles with deviating from God's direction, but his experience is undefined. [Like Paul's thorn in his side (2 Cor. 12)]
- But God is inclined to his children. He's leaning in.
- He is ready to hear us. [Let that sink in]. *God* hears *you*. Last time I really paused to think about it: BIG DEAL! Because of what Jesus did for us, we have his ear.
- God delights to answer our cry favorably... *verse 2*.
- God delights to lift us up and place us on a rock, something solid.
- Do you see the pervasive work of God in David's experience: God inclined (turned to me), God heard, God drew me up, God set my feet on a rock. God put a new song in my mouth.

- Often we think God is absent in our time of difficulty, but *God is in your mess*.

When we see God's commitment to us, it motivates us to a greater commitment to him, and it also gives confidence for the future! David could look to past grace, which increased his confidence to look forward for future grace.

### Look forward to God's future grace on your behalf. (11-12)

- Verses 1-10 were about the past, but v. 12 speaks of David's current reality.
  - Evil was all around him. He says: "Evils encompassed him beyond number."
  - But evil was also within him. Did you notice how he talks more about the sin within him than the sin around him? Who does that?
- Only people who know the God of verse 11. Wow!
- God, even in these moments, you will not hold back. You will not restrain your steadfast love and faithfulness, but you will pour them out and preserve me, in spite of the evil around me and within me.

I am blown away that God (the maker of galaxies) would care for us in the most minute way, and yet he does infinitely more than that...

Have stopped lately to consider how committed God is to you?

- Our sin put us in a pit with no hope of self-salvation. **Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10**
- Have you reached that point? Thinking about it? Not sure? It's time?
- Romans 12:1... In view of the mercies of God, give your entire life to God in worship.
- God has not held back his best from us; how could we hold back our best from him?

T: When we let our commitment flow from God's commitment to us, our lives start to look like vv. 6-8.

## II. Let your commitment imitate the commitment of Jesus.

Verse 6 must have sounded shocking to Jewish ears, especially to hear from the pen of the King?! After all, God commanded his people to make sacrifices...

- Explain sacrificial system quickly.
- David is saying: God doesn't want our action if our hearts aren't in it.
  - We can sing a song without sincerity in our souls. We can read the Bible and not be moved. We can go to Group but not live in community.
  - We can look good on the outside but be a complete wreck on the inside.
- What God really wants from us are open ears. He wants us to listen, because if God has our ears, he has us! (Soccer Nights - "quiet coyotes")

T: You may be wondering: How does God speak to us? Keep reading. Verse 7-8

- David is speaking of God's requirements laid out for him as King, as they are captured in Deuteronomy 17:14-20.
- The scroll = God's directions
- We don't have to be curious about what God wants from us. That's not our problem.
- Our problem is, we like to set aside the directions...
- Have you ever bought an item at the store that required the assembly?
  - I stink. That's why try to follow the directions meticulously.
  - My father in law was a contractor, he never needed directions - Because he was that good. Guess what? When it comes to assembling our lives, (the steps we take, decisions we make), none of us are that good!
- Don't set aside the directions, but desire them and delight in them.

A true and greater commitment consists of not simply receiving directions from God, but desiring to apply those directions with everything you've got and actually enjoying it.

- There is a willingness, a readiness.
- Whatever you want God, "Behold, I have come... Here I am... I'll do whatever you ask me to do." (Isaiah 6:8)
- After I shared Psalm 1 with you a few weeks ago, I asked myself, what's one take away? (Pastors are no different) Let's get back to it... Romans 6.
  - Because you are one with him... Died, buried, raised.
  - 11- so count yourselves
  - Take action. V 12 "let not sin therefore reign..."
  - but verse 13 **"Do not present your members (let me translate: eyes, ears, hands, feet, thoughts, desires, affections, what you love - all of who you are) as instruments (what is an instrument? A tool that accomplishes a purpose) for unrighteousness but present yourselves to God - as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness." (Romans 6:13)**
- That's what these verses are all about.
  
- Before we get to specific directions (like love your enemies, forgive as God has forgiven you, love as Jesus has loved us – you know the easy stuff?, we have to ask): Is there anything my Creator could ask me that would off the table? It's really a matter of surrender.
- If you put your yes on the table, total blank check, listen: there is no limit to how God can work through you.
- Put your yes on the table and allow God to guide you into greater obedience and service for him.
  - Join a team... take a first step
  - Greater leadership in our church
  - Lay-elders
  - Ministry in the future
  - Missions...
- And you won't make it very far serving God until you face opposition. God has an enemy and so do you.
- Satan wants to kill our confidence. He loves the weapon of discouragement. "God could never use you... you'll never make a big difference. You'll never measure up, you're not good enough, look at how sinful you are, look at how many times you've failed."
- But Jesus has a better word: "You are mine. You're forgiven. I have given you what it takes. Look how empowered you are! Your Father is the King, all of his resources are at your disposal." [Back on up Satan,] a better word has arrived.
  - Preach that to yourself.

We see this true and greater commitment most clearly in the True & Greater David, Jesus Christ, who lived these words every single moment of his life.

In Hebrews 10:5-7 says, "Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"

Probably my favorite story that reinforces this truth is when Jesus was in Samaria speaking to a woman in need of grace.

**[[31 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."**

**32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."**

**33 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"]]**

Jesus: **"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34)**

What energized him?  
What kept him going?  
What did he live for?

Can you say that? This is my food. This is what is essential. This is what I have to have. And I'm going to do what I do with a smile on my face, unshakeable joy in my soul.

T: Jesus not only our example, he provides the power to make it happen, and when we live with that kind of commitment, our commitment will be contagious.

### III. Let your commitment be contagious.

#### PART 1: Verse 3:

- Commitment: His commitment takes the form of a...
  - Song: We respond to the revelation of God. That's worship.
  - New song: This is not the first time God has moved. Won't be the last, but God is worthy of a song every time.
  - Song of Praise. Attach the credit to him.
  - Don't miss what's happening here. David's experience tells us that our lowest point may provide the greatest opportunity to point others to God!
- Contagious Commitment:
  - Many will see, and fear, and put their trust in the Lord
  - How you wait, how you cry out, how you regain your footing on the rock of Christ Jesus, and how you give him the credit, can be such a witness that the lives of those around you will be forever changed.

#### PART 2

- Commitment: His commitment takes the form of...
  - Speaking of what God has done. Singing last time. Speaking this time. Verse 5:
  - God, you have multiplied your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us.
- Contagious Commitment:
  - As we reflect on and speak of who God is and what he's done, it causes our hearts to be filled with awe, which leads us to speak of him even more!
  - This is what you've done God and you are amazing. "None can compare with you!" I'm going to talk about you.. I'm going to do my best, but I can only scratch the surface... you've done more in my life than have the ability to tell.
  - Do you see what's happening here? Stories birth more stories...
    - The Christian should always have a story to tell: a new story to tell.
    - Steps change stories. That's our 2017 Vision. We want to see our stories and the stories of those around us change as we invite more people into the story of Jesus.
      - Ex: Soccer Nights: How was your week last week? Reminded that there is fulfillment on the other side of service because God made us to give ourselves away for the sake of others, just like he has done for us.

- Ex: Went to Redemption Hill . . . And I heard an amazing sermon, no, I had a conversation with a friend that really changed my perspective. God set that up.
- Has anyone been lifted up out of the pit of worry? Anyone been lifted out of the pit of greed, anger, pornography, depression? Oh yeah, you've got a story to tell.
- If you are in Christ, you have more stories to tell than you have the ability to tell. That's how amazing God has been to you!
  - Ephesians 1:3
  - 1 John 3:1
  - Too many to count! But count them anyway: "Count it up, count it up, count it up. Line em up, line em up, line em up... Swear the sun shining on me and my huddle, no matter the trouble surrounding us. They don't see...Don't take credit" Lecrae - "Blessings"
  - "I don't have the vocabulary" to describe! I don't enough time.
- Let's not sit on our stories. Look at verses 9-10. Don't hide them. Don't conceal them. Don't hold back.
- And who do we share these stories with? Anyone... Many will see and fear and put their trust in you. Most of the time we're inclined to think of people who do not-yet believe in Jesus, and we certainly should, but it's also the congregation, presumably made up of those who believe in God. What does that do? Stories birth more stories.
- **What's is God doing in your life right now?** Take some time to stop and think about it. Journal a few thoughts, and be quick to brag about God.

In all of this, David was ultimately concerned with the honor and reputation of God. For the adversaries of David and his God, David says, Let them be proven wrong and ashamed (Verses 13-15), but for those who are with David on God's side, he wants them to increase their joy as they give increasing glory to God (Verse 16).

I love the pattern of this Psalm. As David considers the greatness of God, it causes him to communicate his greatness more and more and more, but as he communicates it more and more and more, it causes others to consider and communicate that same greatness more, and more, and more.

But it all starts with our vision of God. The Psalm ends like it begins: God, I need you. Deliver me.

*Conclusion:*

As Dan and our team come out, we're going to have an opportunity to declare the greatness of God with a song about his greatness. But here's my prayer for you today: 1) If you've never stepped into the journey of faith through Jesus, I would ask you - why not today? 2) If you are journeying with Jesus, why wouldn't you ask God to make your commitment truer and greater, so that your commitment could become contagious.

Let's pray:

- Would you stop and consider how God has been kind to you this week? What blessings have you received from God? Count them up. (Friendship, provision, breath)
- Would you stop and consider the true and greater work of Jesus on your behalf? Lived a perfect life for you. He died a despicable death for you. He rose again for you!
- God, in light of your commitment to us, how could we not be committed to you? "May we, who seek you, rejoice and be glad in you, may we who love continually say, "Great is the Lord!"