What is commitment?

If most Christians in America were as dedicated to Christ and mandates emphasized by Him—prayer, study and meditation on God's Word, helping those in need, and evangelism—as they are to satisfying the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life" (1 John 2:16), a great spiritual awakening in America would be guaranteed. Christ warned of this conflict and implied that His followers would always be confronted with a decision and a choice: live God's way or compromise and live a life consistent with the ways of the world.

Obviously, the sports, recreation, and other activities that appeal to our desires, enchantments, and fascinations are not the problems. These are merely outside indicators of inner spiritual conditions. The primary problem we see in American Christianity is a lack of vital and sincere commitment to God's way as mandated and exemplified by Jesus.

Commitment to Lordship
There are many dedicated Christians who are probably willing to accept God's direction at any moment and surrender everything to Him to accomplish whatever He has chosen for them to do. However, this seems to be the exception rather than the norm.

In today's Christian society in the West, especially in America, the standard requires very little commitment and even less dedication. This results in a huge body of believers who seem never to mature and "grow up in all aspects into Him" (Ephesians 4:15). They have accepted Christ as their Savior but have not made Him their Lord.

Commitment to the Lordship of Christ means that we must be willing to go where God determines we can best be utilized and not get so caught up in the daily affairs of life that we are unable to recognize His guidance and His directives.

Priorities
Although most Christians realize that God expects to be first in their lives, followed by spouse and family, work, and so on, few understand that by maintaining this priority standard conflicts often can develop.

Putting God first means an active, daily process of knowing and being known by Him. It requires a heartfelt desire to please God and a willingness to accept God's authority over our wills, desires, or wants. As such, many times the pursuit of this first priority—keeping Him first in our lives—comes in conflict with the secondary priorities—responsibility to spouse, family, work, and, in some instances, recreation. However,
those dedicated to keeping God first will ultimately come to the realization that the first priority lasts for eternity; all others cease at death. "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other" (Luke 16:13). All that truly matters is what we can do for the kingdom of God. If this is our priority, all other priorities will fall in place.

Other commitments

Sometimes it's easier for Christians to commit money (treasures) than it is to commit time and talents. However, stewardship does not involve money at the exclusion of time and talents; it comprises all three. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

*Treasures.* The way Christians use money is the clearest outside indicator of an inner spiritual condition. Not only is Matthew 6:21 a spiritual truth that reflects Christians' spiritual condition, but it also shows directive because where the heart is, treasures will ultimately soon follow.

*Talents.* Many Christians waste the intellect, abilities, and talents that God has given by dedicating their lives to the pursuit of material success. There is nothing wrong with success, as long as it is a product of a life dedicated to God's service. To use those gifts in the pursuit of material wealth and prominence from the world is, in the scheme of God's overall plan, an exercise in futility.

*Time.* Not many Christians in America today can honestly say that they daily give God the time He wants from them. In recent surveys it was found that after time is set aside for work, eating, sleeping, and other activities of a typical daily routine, less than 2 percent of the remaining time is spent in personal communication with God—prayer, meditation, and study of God's Word. Time is definitely the one area of our lives over which His Lordship is least considered.

Conclusion

The commitment of our treasures goes beyond giving money to the work of the Lord. It also includes giving Him our time and talents and making Him first priority in our lives. "But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you" (Luke 12:31). The decision of choosing which master to follow is one that all Christians must make daily. For this reason, Christ must be not only Savior but also the Lord of our lives.