

# Find the Strength to Break Barriers to our Commitment to Christ

**Headline:** Jesus said “come follow Me” to His disciples many times throughout the gospels. Join us Friday morning as we look at the barriers that we experience in our attempts to follow Christ, and how we can do hero’s work to be fully committed to Christ.

**Objective:** There are many obstacles between us and Christ, however, we know a few things for certain about our life mission. We have a goal (to get to heaven and to avoid hell), a road map (Scripture and Tradition), examples to follow (the saints, particularly St. Joseph), leadership (the pope, bishops, priests, and deacons), clear teaching authority (the magisterium of the Church), help along the way (the sacraments) and divine guidance (the Holy Spirit). It is clear that we are well-equipped and have the tools and resources we need, but are we willing to make the necessary changes? Use this session to discuss what separates us from being fully committed to Christ in our lives.

**Song Suggestion:** Here I am Lord or Send us Your spirit

## Bible and Catechism Readings:

### Luke 9:57-62 The Cost of Following Jesus

As they were walking along the road, a man said to Him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” He said to another man, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.” Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

### Isaiah 56:6-7

"Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, To minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD, To be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the sabbath And holds fast My covenant; Even those I will bring to My holy mountain And make them joyful in My house of prayer Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."

### Catechism 2086

"The first commandment embraces faith, hope, and charity. When we say 'God' we confess a constant, unchangeable being, always the same, faithful and just, without any evil. It follows that we must necessarily accept his words and have complete faith in him and acknowledge his authority. He is almighty, merciful, and infinitely beneficent. Who could not place all hope in him? Who could not love him when contemplating the treasures of goodness and love he has poured out on us? Hence the formula God employs in the Scripture at the beginning and end of his commandments: 'I am the LORD.'

### Catechism 2094

One can sin against God's love in various ways:

- indifference neglects or refuses to reflect on divine charity; it fails to consider its prevenient goodness and denies its power;
- ingratitude fails or refuses to acknowledge divine charity and to return him love for love;

- lukewarmness is hesitation or negligence in responding to divine love; it can imply refusal to give oneself over to the prompting of charity;
- acedia or spiritual sloth goes so far as to refuse the joy that comes from God and to be repelled by divine goodness;
- hatred of God comes from pride. It is contrary to love of God, whose goodness it denies, and whom it presumes to curse as the one who forbids sins and inflicts punishments.

**Saint:** For this topic I chose St Paul. St Paul was a Roman citizen and a Pharisee, and he presided over the persecutions of early Christians. However, when God got through to him in a powerful vision, Paul committed to preaching the word of God, including writing much to the people of the fledgling church that is recorded in the Bible. Paul traveled the European continent, risking imprisonment from non-believers, and did so even to his own death at the hands of Nero, the Emperor of the Roman empire at the time. Talk about overcoming a bad past and committing fully to following God...

**Vignette:** Bill struggles to commit to following God because of doubts about his faith and the demands of following the teachings of the church. He also finds it difficult to balance his spiritual life with the demands of his career, which often leaves him feeling drained and disconnected. Additionally, Bill is influenced by a social circle that doesn't prioritize religious values, making it harder for him to stay focused on his spiritual journey. To overcome these challenges, Bill looks for support from a faith-based community that understands and shares his struggles. Engaging in regular prayer and meditation can help Bill strengthen his relationship with God and find clarity and peace amidst his busy life.

**Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:**

What does the phrase “Let go, Let God” mean to you? Can you let go and fully trust in God?

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Are there sins or past events that are creating a barrier to your commitment to Christ?

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Do you go to confession regularly? Do you find that it helps in your journey to follow Christ?

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**Resources:**

Obstacles: <https://integratedcatholiclife.org/2021/08/randy-hain-what-are-the-obstacles-between-catholic-men-and-christ-2/>

St Paul: [https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=91](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=91)

**Action Plan:**

Work with your small team to identify the common barriers to committing to Christ that afflict your team. Develop a short list of your top barriers, and which ones you will focus on and take a positive action to committing more fully to Christ in your life.

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