**Commitment**

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

**Introduction** – We live in times which deny commitment. Mankind has no respect for any kind of contract, whether it be marriage, a major financial deal, a simple promise to someone. The story of Jephthah is a powerful reminder of the seriousness of commitment and honesty, before God and man. Tonight we will look into the story of Jephthah to glean a powerful lesson from profound words.

1. **The Story of Jephthah**
2. **Jephthah – Judges 11:1-3**
* Gileadite
* Mighty man of valor
* Son of a harlot
* Cast out by brothers
* Ended in the land of Tob
1. **Elders beseech him to lead in war – Judges 11:4-11**
* Gileadite elders send for him, ask him to lead, and offer him the seat of a Judge
* Jephthah is surprised and asks why after the treatment he receives
* They vow to give him the seat of leadership
1. **Dialogue with King of Ammon - Judges 11:12-27**
* King makes false claims – Out of Egypt you stole our land from The Jabbok to the Arnon and to the Jordan.
* Jephthah reminds the King of the real story. Sihon attacked Israel and God gave that land to His people; they waited 300 years to claim unfair seizure of the land.
1. **The Vow – Judges 11:29-31**
* Jephthah makes a rash vow to God in a plea for deliverance and victory – Verse 30
* Victory is realized – Verses 32-33
1. **Consequences – Judges 11:34-40**
* His daughter never knew a man and bewailed her virginity before God and lived a celibate woman in respect of her father’s vow
* New tradition of the daughters of Israel to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah four days a year
1. **Jephthah’s recognition of commitment – Judges 11:35**
* “I cannot go back”

**Jephthah understood he made a solemn commitment before Jehovah, he couldn’t make himself out to be a liar and be a righteous man. He understood something Israel historically failed to grasp. As God’s people, we must have the same understanding as this noteworthy Judge!**

**2).** **Israel had Commitment problems**

A. God Promised Blessings (Deuteronomy 8: 5-10) and curses (Deuteronomy 8:11-20)

B. He reiterated the same thing in Deuteronomy 28: 1-6; 15-19

C. They wandered for 40 years in the wilderness

D. Taken captive for 70 years

E. After the restoration to the promised land they finally got the idea that idolatry is unacceptable

**3).** **Joshua made a firm stand – Joshua 24:14-22**

**4). Jesus alluded to the same thing – Luke 9:60-62**

* **You cannot put your hand to the plow and look back**
* **If you lose focus you will swerve**

**5). Faithfulness is commitment – Revelation 2:10; I Timothy 6:11-16**

* **Note the church at Laodicea – Revelation 3:14-19, commitment failed!**

**Brethren, we cannot go back, we cannot fail; defeat is not an option. We can overcome and we better overcome or we will face eternal destruction.**