



Words of Blessing

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Weekly Words*

Epiphany Week 4: January 29, 2012

Matthew 4:19-20 Jesus said to them, “Come with me, and I will teach you to catch men.” At once they left their nets and went with him.

Living the Word: Commitment

An epiphany is when you experience the light—the reality—of Christ your Lord. That is the moment of commitment. If you see me—Jesus—as the word and the truth, then will you commit your life to me and follow me as my disciples did? There is a time when you know that you have been called to follow and use the gifts you have been given through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a big commitment. For many that commitment comes in a single moment; but for all the commitment is one that deepens over time. If you have been called or are still waiting to hear that call, your commitment to me will deepen over time and as you step out in faith to do my work. Your commitment grows as you deepen your prayer life, study God’s word, become part of a group who shares your faith and commitment, and overcome the challenges and difficulties that you may encounter each day.

My child, your commitment deepens as you accept my love in your heart and share it with others. It is not easy, and it takes courage to love someone no matter what. When you commit your life to me, you have to be willing to live and offer love, kindness, mercy, and forgiveness every day. You live a life of truth and honesty, of compassion and faithfulness. That can be hard. So the commitment is a decision you look at every day. If you ask for my help to make and keep your commitment, I will be there. You will overcome obstacles and find strength for what seems impossible to do or bear. You will see your prayers and questions answered, and you will get through those rough times of pain and struggle. What seemed like it would never happen, or would take a miracle for it to happen, will happen. Those who give me their lives and commit their way to me will indeed experience miracles of love. They will experience grace and will see lives changed.

Each day you may have to renew your commitment, so begin your day by offering me your life, your gifts, your love, and all that you are. You offer prayers for all those you love or need to love. You offer a blessing and prayer for the people in your life, for the church, and for the world. Commitment comes when you trust in me and give me your life. Live the word.

Meet with others this week and share my words. Share your answers, journey, and love.

Questions for the week; share them with a friend: Have you had that moment when you committed your life to me? If you have, how has that commitment grown? If you have not had that moment, what is holding you back? What is the hardest part of committing your life to me? How do you feel about using your gifts in more ways and giving more time to using them?

Action for the week: Do something special this week with or for someone in your family. Let this person know you care about him or her and tell this person how he or she has blessed your life.

Daily prayer for the week: *Look and listen for those moments when you consciously need and seek my presence. I will be there. Offer prayers for others that they will see my light and love. Offer this prayer in the week ahead. “Lord, I commit my life to you. Let me experience your presence in all I do.”*

The following words are for you. You will know which ones speak to you personally and answer your questions, concerns, or prayers. These words are guidance for you in your journey.

- There is a time to go forward and leave behind the lessons learned. Trust in me. Let go and go on. You have grown in so many ways and have let your gifts and light shine in humble ways but ways that have helped and blessed many. You are very special.
- You are growing spiritually. Just keep moving forward step by step. One day soon take a *big* step! What is that big step? Well, it is moving out and forward in your commitment to me and to the work I have for you to do. Is it big? Well, it is bigger than you would ask for!
- There is joy to be found in each day, but you have to be willing to see it and receive it within. I will give you real joy in each day in the next three weeks. Look for it and be open, for it may not look like what you expect. This experience is a blessing to you and others in your life.
- I will bless you but more in the next six weeks. You will be filled with renewed confidence and joy. I want you to be excited about this year and to step out and really build up your church and my people in ways that will change lives so all know my love and reality.
- You have to *believe* you are a good person and that your life and future can be filled with blessings. There is a mission for you to do that will help you believe in yourself, in the person I have called and blessed. Commit this year to doing things of compassion, love, joy, and hope.
- You have committed your love and journey to me and to those special people in your life. The journey will be important because I want you to live my word each day with purpose, faith, and joy. You are caring and faith-filled, strong and gentle. Pray about that commitment each day and about how we, together, can do it and make it so real to each person you touch. Pray about my words. Trust.
- Let me be your guide and anchor this year. I will guide you in showing you where and how to use your gifts more and more. I will remind you each day, in some way, to show the people in your life, your family, and those you love how to find joy, hope, and new life through me. That is the anchor. Just say yes.
- Be an evangelist. Go out! Share your story. Tell my story and bring them to me—all of them. I wait. Now you don't have to knock on doors, but you can bring more people to our church and to a mission of living my word—and that is what I ask of you this year. Will you say yes? Now?
- This is a new year. It is a special year for you. It will be filled with blessing and joy. There will also be a call and invitation for you to use your gifts to help me. There are people who need the gifts you have. Be aware that two friends in your life are waiting to help you, renew your spirit,

and affirm your gifts and call. And three people in your family will also be part of this year's journey.

- Let my mother Mary be a blessing and presence in your daily life. She brings a word and assurance to you, just as she received the same comfort, call, and word to be the mother of Jesus, the Son of God. Build up my church and people, your family, and the missions and call of your own church, living my word each day. I ask you to do and give more. See miracles unfold!

-There are people praying and waiting to know my love, words, and reality. You are ready. You have the gifts needed for this call. You have a church, family, and friends who so believe in you. I ask you to do this. Focus on sharing my words with more people and sharing your own journey with others so they come to see me too. Plant "flowers" and watch them bloom.

- My church—your church—needs to grow and reach out. I hope you can find ways to bring in others. I know you can do this! *Look. See* those who need a church where they are blessed and where they can learn and help one another. You can begin now with language, age, gifts, and needs. You and others can begin now. Trust in me. Your church can grow and help many more. Commit all to me.

- Look for new opportunities to reach out to others, help, heal, welcome, and encourage. Your church can grow in more ways than you can dream of! People look for healing, kindness, faith, a welcome, and love. They just need the invitation, welcome, and love that you and others can offer. Ready? You are!

- It is time *now* to make a new commitment to me. Commit your day, your life, and your gifts to me. Let go of your fears, agenda, or plans and just take my hand. I will show you how I can use you to touch and bless the lives of those around you who are so in need. I want to use your gifts, your faith, and your compassion.
- I come to people in many different ways. Believe you will see me when you least expect it. I am waiting. I ask you to reach out to families with children. So many are just waiting for an invitation, a friend, and a welcome. I bless all who come to me offering this help with unshakable faith in me. Look for me in that child who asks for prayers and the mother who is struggling or afraid. Together we can do so much, and you will find another call to live out each day.
- Don't be afraid. Instead, put your faith in me and in those who love you and walk with you in this journey of life. Never think you don't have gifts, a mission, or friends. This year I ask you to go out and welcome many more people to your church and its mission outreach and faith. Share my words and your story. You will see miracles. Pack a small suitcase with love, my words, and a small but important "reminder" for them so they will always remember me, you, and this mission.
- You have a story to share that will inspire others. You have a witness that you will one day give to heal and bring people back to my church, where, through you, they will see their worth, call, and gifts. They will one day share my love, words, and reality. In your story, they will see theirs unfold. It will.
- It is time for you to make and live a commitment to me. It is time to go out and bring people to know me. So I will strengthen the gifts you have by giving you more boldness and faith that is seen to share with the world around you. Begin by sharing this with someone who lives far away.
- As you ponder decisions for your future—a change in career and work, where you live, or your call, ministry, and gifts—believe in yourself and in your gifts and skills. You will know when to make that decision (soon). Confidence in my words and reality will guide you each day. You are being strengthened to go out. Use your stronger and more needed witness. Now!
- Friends are a blessing. Support your friends. Love them. Pray for them. Reach out beyond yourself. Some have friends who are neighbors, who are on a church committee with them, or who have the same gifts and are using them together but in different ways. Your friends (and family) are very, very important to your life.
- Well, I keep telling you there is a new path ahead. It brings a whole new beginning to your journey. You will discover the depth of a special friendship, and you will see your family come together. Have faith in me. Don't forget to pray, listen, and step out each day.
- Love yourself. No matter what you have done I love you and want you to love who you are. Pray for those who do not seem to love you. Do not be angry with those who have hurt you. Stay with a friend who demands a lot, but focus on bringing your friend to know and love me and to go to church.
- Take time for sharing groups or study groups in your church. Deepen your knowledge of me. A sharing group, study group, or fellowship group can bless and help many. You need this in your life now and in the year ahead. Be open to who, how, and when something new or a simple change can bring a special new blessing. Look for me and look for a very special angel.
- My Holy Spirit will fill you to overflowing. You will go out and tell your story and change lives. Trust! Bring people to my church—your church. Bring in all ages and show them how and why they are needed. This is so important.
- Pray at all times. As you share your story, know that through your story and witness others will come to know my love, words, and reality. Get others really involved in my church. Build it up! Like Paul, go out. Bring my love, words, and reality into the world. Share your witness and see

miracles. Reach out to heal, bless, give hope to, and love others who are “different” but strong in faith. Watch and never forget what you will learn and become.

Pray and read my words to you

Please note that the Bible verses are drawn from the Good News Translation (or Today’s English version), so references to a particular stopping place may not match your translation exactly.

Psalms 34:1-4

Isaiah 40:30-31

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Mark 16:14-20

Acts 1:6-8

John 15:1-5

Mark 11:4-20

Luke 9:1-6

Acts 4:31-35

Matthew 4: 18-22

John 15:7-17

Mark 2:13-14

Acts 2:43-47

2 Timothy 1:11-14

Ephesians 1:13-19

1 John 3:17 and 23-24

Colossians 3:12-15

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5,11

Hebrews 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

1 Peter 5:1-7

Galatians 1:11-12 & 6:9-10

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

*Note: Jesus asked our listener to go back to some earlier words this year, so the words for Epiphany 2012 are an enhanced version of the words from Epiphany 2004. They have been expanded to include features of the more recent iterations of the weekly words, and more Bible verses have been added for groups that use them as a Bible study tool. We hope you will enjoy revisiting these words or, if you are new to the weekly words, experiencing them for the first time.