**TEXT: ACTS 22:1-16**

**THEME: TOTAL COMMITMENT TO CHRIST**

Intrd.: Today, total commitment is lacking in many Christians. And this lack of commitment marks a difference between the early Christians and today’s Christians. The early Christians shared their commitment that people who saw it knew that they had been with Jesus. The people of their day could see the fruits of their faith in Jesus. These fruits were characterized by their unfailing commitment to their master—nothing was too great for them to do. This kind of commitment is lacking in many Christians. Today we give all kind of reasons or excuses for our lack of commitment. But the fact of the matter is that you cannot be totally committed to Master Jesus, if the cross of Calvary is kept unfocussed. If we are to let Jesus have all that we are and have, we must continue to daily “survey the wondrous cross”—where the prince of glory died. A commitment that does not begin at the cross will never be real—it will fail. Our commitment, my brethren must begin at the “foot of the Calvary.” Isaac Walt in 1707 thought of how he met Jesus at the cross penned these words: “At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light and the burden of my heart rolled away. It was there by faith I receive my sight, and the now I am happy all the day!” in our text Paul tells a story of his conversion, how he met the Lord—a point of no return. At the crux of his conversion story, there is another implied story and it is his commitment to God from that day onward. You see our commitment to god can be reflected in the church and how we give to ministry in church. What I want to do this morning is to give you reason why total commitment Christ should begin at the cross:

**1. Total commitment should begin at the cross because at the cross our sinfulness is revealed and forgiven and healing are assured.**

-the fact that Jesus who knew no sin could suffer and died on the cross tells me that our sinful condition was terrible before God. In order for God to heal and redeem us he had to give his only son, Jesus for us. It was love that drew salvation plan; it was love that made God to give his son; it was love that substituted Jesus in our place.

-God forsook his son on the cross—I hear him cried, “My God, My God why have thou forsaken me?” –He died for man—the creature’s sin—the creator dying for his creature’s sin. No one can do this. It is difficult for someone to die in the place of a child, not even a slave or a stranger. When I imagine the suffering of Christ on the cross I see my own sinfulness. So I can say to that old rugged cross I will ever be true, its shame and reproach but Jesus gladly bear.

**2. Total commitment should begin at the cross because at the cross the love of God is revealed (read John 3:16).**

“I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore, very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more; but the master of the sea heard my despairing cry, from the waters lifted me, love lifted me, when nothing else could help, love lifted me, love lifted me”

“Love so amazing, so divine, demands my souls, my life, my all.”

-How we ever know the depth of God’s love. When we were still sinner, God gave his best—to reconcile us unto himself (Col. 1:20-23).

-He took the first step—in reconciling us to himself.

**3. Total commitment should begin at the cross because at the cross the will of God is revealed.**

-Christ died to save us. Why did he save us? He saved us for Holy living and service.

-If our commitment to Christ is based on genuine salvation experience or what Christ has done for us, it will last; it will bear fruits in our lives. But if it is based on mere church membership and second-handed faith it will be a burden to give to the church; it will be like we are forced to give to the church.

-What Christ has done on the cross demands:

**Our Gratitude:** Mary says, “My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in my God, my savior. Psalm 54:6-7 says, “I will freely sacrifice to You; I will praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good. For He has delivered me out of all trouble; And my eye has seen its desire upon my enemies.” It is out of gratitude that the Psalmist brings sacrifice to the Lord; God has delivered him. So what Christ has done on the cross demands my gratitude.

**Our Love:** William R Featherston says, “My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine; for thee all the follies of sin I resign; my gracious Redeemer, my savior art thou; if ever I love thee my Jesus ‘tis now”

**Our Possession:** In 1874, Frances Ridley Havergal wrote that consecration hymn “Take my Life and Let it be”. But the verses came in part. In 1873 three years after her father death she wrote the verse “Take my voice and let me sing, Always, only, for my King.” And in 1874 she wrote two other verses after her experience at the Areley House. Four years later in 1878, she penned these words: “Take my silver and my gold Not a mite would I withhold; Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.” After writing, she packed her jewelry and shipped them to the church mission house to be disposed and proceed sent to Bible society to print bibles for the mission field.

**Our Service:** John Henry Sammis, a native of Brooklyn, NY says, “What he says we will go, where he sends we will go; never fear only trust and obey.”

**Ourselves:** Paul says to the church in Rome, “I beseech by the mercies of God that you offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God as your spiritual worship. Do not confirm to the world but be transform by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God what is good and acceptable and perfect’(Rom. 12;1-2)

**Conclusion:** As we come to the moment of decision, I will want you to look at the cross as the place to begin your commitment this morning; it a place where our sins were revealed, forgiven and healed. Therefore it demands our all. James Montgomery writes: were the whole realms of nature mine that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. That’s the commitment to Christ.