

I am self-professed self-help junkie. It's true I cannot read enough self-help books, attend enough motivational seminars, talk to enough successful people, read enough blogs, or listen to enough leadership podcasts to satisfy my thirst for self-improvement. However when I take a step back there are only a few guiding principles that all these books, seminars, podcasts, and leaders talk about. The difference between them is merely that leaders take on it. It's the same as preachers on Sundays. They are all preaching from the same Bible and about the same core principles, however, the way that one Pastor conveys these principles may speak to you more than another pastor. I plan over my series of blogs on this website to share with you my view of these leadership principles. Today I want to talk about commitments.

I love commitments. I love getting things done. I mean I loooooove to get thing done. I get a deep joy out of putting things on a to do list and a greater thrill out of crossing them off. I get a joy out a job well done more than most people would understand. I love being in charge and effecting change.

I used to be an elected official, and when I was, I was always asked why I did it. I always responded with an analogy of a pothole. When you see a pothole in the road there are two reactions you can have. The first is "there is a pothole, how can I fix this?" The second reaction is "there is a pothole, I hope someone fixes it." I have naturally had the reaction of "how can I fix this pothole." When I see a problem I don't want to sit back and wait for it to change, I want to change it myself. This is one my best qualities but it's also is one my biggest weaknesses. I do no want to sound like I am interviewing for a job but I find its true with most leaders that their biggest strengths often become their biggest challenges. Every time I do self-reflection this always ends up as one of the areas I want to improve on. The reason why it's a challenge is because I can not fix all the problems I see and when I try to, I over commit. However,when I over-commit I can not fix any problems. The key is to commit to only the problems you can focus on effectively.

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There is a lot of power behind the word commitment. Webster's dictionary defines commitment as an agreement or pledge to do something in the future. A pledge is your word. When you say you will do something in the future you are making a pledge to this person or a commitment. Once you break one pledge, your other pledges become less meaningful. One of the most important things as a leader is to do what you say you will do in the future. Not doing what you say will destroy your credibility to those you serve and will cause failure in all aspects of your leadership. As [Craig Groeschel](#) says "People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right." If you say you will do something and do not do it, that's not authentic leadership. This includes the smallest things such as "I will call you later", "I will introduce you to this person", and "let's get together sometime in the near future". Just as in the Gospel of Matthew we learn "Well done good and faithful servant you have been faithful with a few things I will put you in charge of many." In other words we learn that we must be faithful to our small commitments to be given large commitments.

[shareable cite="Craig Groeschel"]"People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right."[/shareable]

A famous yet true statement is, the path to failure is paved with good intentions. We all live busy lives and we mean well. However, when we over commit we are not keeping our pledges. When you make a commitment it has to come from the same 168 hour week you already had planned out, what else you are going to give up in those 168 hours to fulfill that commitment.

What are your main commitments? Do your other commitments stop you from fulfilling the first commitments you have made? I have made several commitments in my life. First, I have committed my life to Christ. Second, I have committed to my wife and our family. Third, I have committed to serve my clients. Last I have committed to several non profits I support. These commitments are first and foremost and commitments I take that would impede me from completing them need to be avoided.

Do my actions line up with my words? Too often in life they do not. My weekly 168 hours are not always spent honoring these commitments. Why does it not always line up? Over commitment is why. Whenever I am involved in an organization and an opportunity comes about to serve where I can use my gifts and talents, I salivate at the mouth to volunteer. However I need to stop thinking this and ask myself can I actually commit to this and still honor my other commitments? Once again, the path of failure is

paved with good intentions. We as leaders want to help others, which leads to over-commits. This is why I said in the beginning, this is one my biggest strengths and also one of my biggest weaknesses

As I write this blog I am at a point in my life where I have over-committed. My schedule has not allowed me ample time to honor my commitment to Christ, my wife, or my clients. I have been so busy I lost my focus. I have been so busy I could not honor my commitments. Just like the saying jack of all trades and master of none, too many commitments leads to non completion of commitments.

We as leaders need to look at every opportunity to lead or to serve that is presented to us not with “How can I help serve,” but “Can I help serve without sacrificing a current commitment.” You see if we over commit we can not honor the new commitment we just made or our old commitments. Even though we meant to do more good we end up doing less. We do not become part of the solution we become part of the problem. Even though myself and other leaders know this, why do we do this? Because we are human.

In the Bible we learn that we are human and are fallen. Since we are human we will sin and make the same mistakes over and over again. The only way to prevent making those mistakes is to realize our fallen nature is inherently flawed and accept that we can not do it all on our own. We must rely on God. So before I make another commitment I will pause and pray and ask God to let me know if this is something I should take on.

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It’s ok to wait and let God show it in your heart before you make a commitment. It might not feel right at the time. You might feel you are letting people down by giving them the commitment they desire. You would really be letting them down by saying yes and

not being able to follow through. *This is the art of saying no because sometimes no is the commitment level you need to give someone to show them respect.*

Take aways

- **Prioritize your commitments in your life**
- **We all have 168 hours in a week, how can you fulfill your commitments in that time**
- **Take time to pray first and consider any commitment and its effect on your life before you agree to it**
- **Rely on God, not yourself**
- **Do not be afraid to say no, it may have a bigger impact than yes**