



Are You A Gamblin' Man?

Focused Living

In 1859 Charles Blondin became the first man to walk a tight-rope across Niagara Falls. 25,000 folks gathered to watch him walk a 1000 ft rope suspended 160 ft above the raging waters pushing a wheelbarrow loaded with 250 lbs of cement for balance. The crowd roared with approval when he promised to push a man across instead of the cement. Spying a man cheering

loudly, he asked, "Sir, do you think I could safely carry you across in this wheelbarrow?" "Yes. I've seen you cross many times!" Blondin replied with a smile, "If you really believe, **get in the wheelbarrow!**" The man refused. Would you?

THEME FOR THE YEAR Jesus is looking for "ALL IN" men who will trust Him enough to get in His wheelbarrow. He is not looking for great men of faith or men who will try harder. He is looking for men who will trust the faithfulness of His great character to do exactly as He has promised. He calls men to be players on the field, not spectators in the stands. Humble followers, not fickle fans. Men who obey in reality not operate in theory. Guys who honor Him with their lives, not just their lips. Not perfect, but authentic. Men who are so overwhelmed by the gracious forgiveness of His death that they are compelled to live **ALL IN** by growing in their love for Him. The word 'commit' in the OT means to 'roll the dice' (Ps 37:5). When you gamble on God you never lose because the odds are always 100%. Why do smart men go **ALL IN** when they draw a royal straight flush? If you knew with absolute certainty that property in Irmo would be worth \$5 mil an acre next week, what would you do this week? Why? (Matt 13:44-46; Prov 3:5-6). In the NT 'commit' is a banking term (parathitheme. Luke 23:46) meaning to "give over." God invites you to go **ALL IN** by investing in or banking on Him because He **promises** an eternally safe and great return with your life. What part of 'ALL' do you not understand?

THEME VERSE (Mt 22:37-40; Dt 6:4-5) An **ALL IN** life committed to Christ begins with an **ALL OUT** love for God. The God focused heart has 5 clear outcomes. "Love God with **ALL** your...."

HEART= CHARACTER. Do you live to be more like Jesus now than you were 6 months ago? How? (Eph 5:1; Rom 8:28-29)

SOUL = CONVICTION. Men sacrifice their lives for that which they have real passion (pascal. Pascal Lamb. Jn 1:29; Is 53:5-10; I Pt 1:18-21). An **ALL IN** man is passionate for the things on God's heart and sacrifices to pursue them no matter the cost. (Luke 22:42; John 8:29) Men do what they value, not simply what they say they believe.

MIND = COMPREHENSION. An **ALL IN** man gives all he knows about himself to all he knows about God. He seeks to diligently apply God's truth between Sundays (Josh 1:7-9; Ezra 7:10; Luke 6:46-49; Prov 1:7; 9:10; Ps 119:18; Jam 1:22-25). He understands that you don't own it until you live it. Telling is not teaching. Information is not transformation. Assuming is not assimilating. Listening is not learning. You learn and grow the most by doing what God says to do!

STRENGTH = COURAGE. **ALL IN** men give 100% and not just enough to get by. They are committed to excellence for God's glory. (Deut 6:5; Col 3:17, 23-24) "Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning your salvation." Dallas Willard.

NEIGHBOR = COMPASSION. God's men understand 'overflow' and desire to show and share God's with others as they take the initiative and act sacrificially to meet real needs in the people God sovereignly puts around us. (Acts 3; Mark 10:43-52; I John 4:10)

JESUS MODELS "ALL IN" Luke 9:22; 23:46; Mark 10: 27, 32-34, 45; John 5:30; 6:38; Phil 2:5-8; Heb 12:1-3



JESUS CALLS MEN TO BE "ALL IN" Matt 6:33; 8:22; 9:9; 10:33; 19:21; 22:37-39; 28:16-20; Mark 1:17-18; 10:21, 31; 43-44; Luke 6:46-48; 9:23-26; John 1:43; John 15:1-5; 12-13; 21:19-22; Rev 3:15-16

MEN RESPOND TO GOD'S "ALL IN" CALL **DISCIPLES** Luke 5:11 **PETER** Mark 10:28-31; I Pet 1:6-9, 13-21; 2:21-24; 4:1-2, 8, 19 **PAUL** Phil 1:20-21; Rom 5:13; 12:1-2; I Cor 10:31; II Cor 11:23-28; Gal 2:20; Eph 3:19; 5:1-2, 25-26; Phil 2:3-4; 3:7-14; Col 1:15-18; 1:28-29; 3:23-24; I Thess 5:16-18; II Tim 1:8-12; 2:1-9; 4:1-8; **JOHN** I John 3:16-18; Rev 3:15-16 **OTHER DUDES** Heb 11:1-40

ASSIGNMENT Invest time looking up most of the verses in each category above noting any 'ALL IN' words/phrases such as "all", "only", "every", "fully", "always", "nothing", "everything", "must", "never", "first" or "Lord". Note also any promises or commands. Come ready to share what truth moved you to be **ALL IN**.

TAG TEAM What motivated you to get in God's wheelbarrow?