

Declaration of Commitment

Before a young man receives an appointment as an officer in the United States Air Force, a declaration of commitment is made: "I (state your name), having been appointed a second lieutenant, in the United States Air Force, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter, so help me God." Oaths similar to this are so stated in the other branches of military service.

Before an immigrant is granted United States Citizenship, a declaration of commitment is made: "I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiances and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God."

Throughout our society, we see the practice of verbal commitments being made by those entering into a specified service.

To require a confession of allegiance requires that the one requiring allegiance has the right to do so. The Centurion, who made a request of the Lord, understood the significance of authority, when he said, "For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers: and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it" (Luke 7:8). With this necessity of authority understood, we are assured that Jesus of Nazareth has that authority, for the scriptures say, "who was declared [to be] the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:4).

With this in mind we can readily understand three statements made in the scriptures: (1) When Philip preached to the Ethiopian, "as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is

water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:36-37). (2) “because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9-10). (3) The Apostle Paul to Timothy: “Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses. I charge thee in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 6:12-14).

Ross Triplett, Sr.