

# **Commentary: Average church member or all-in Christian**

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I cannot tell you who God will use, but I can tell you this: No one is stopping you from becoming one of them.

Many of us have come to a crossroads, a point of decision. God lays before each of his children the choice—whether you want it all or are content with only some of all he has to offer.

Some is still a lot, because you are a new creature in Christ and have a knowledge of his Spirit and its workings through his word. But if you want more, it will cost you. It will take commitment, time, energy, looking foolish and changing the course of your life.

It's a very personal decision and choice.

God has given each of us the freedom to choose how much and how closely we want to follow and live for him, much like the people who sign up for special elite forces in the military, which are strictly voluntary.

If you choose to follow Jesus all the way, with everything you've got, but at any time during your training, you decide you were not cut out for such a rigorous life of faith, you simply can ring a bell and go back to your place in the regular service.

God will not fault you for slowing down some while staying true to him and your calling to be, in some way, an instrument of his love wherever you are. You would have learned a lot by stepping out by faith and making it as far as you did.

For those who want to live the faith-life and are determined to go on with

the training, be prepared for your “[Hell Week](#).” It’s the making of what you need to become, to be prepared for the future God knows is coming.

## **A Christian’s SEAL training**

You will need to learn to rise above difficulties, to thank God in any and every situation, to believe he will keep all his promises to you. You will need to learn to lay down your life for others.

God could make it much easier on you, but you won’t let him, because you want to be all you can be in Christ, and you want that medal. So, if that is the case, he will push on with your training.

From now on, every day will take faith. Get used to it if you are to live the faith-life. Glory in it and love it, for it is the destiny of every true child of God.

It will be challenging, and you will fall on your path to victory, but you will be further ahead than if you never had tried. It’s better to try and fail than not to try at all. But you won’t fail, because forward progress is not failure.

You won’t be able to settle down, lay back, and keep the comfortable, cushy life you see the world advertising around you, but you can set the world alight.

The enemy will fight that kind of dedication, faith and positive enthusiasm more than just about anything else.

Permit some to be nominal Christians if you will, but let you say like Paul: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

*Robert Ritzenhein, after retiring from full-time missionary service, lives in Japan, organizing Christian programs for area rest homes, and is the yearly Santa at his city's hospitals. The views expressed in this opinion article are those of the author.*