

One of the most fundamental questions that I believe we can ask is: 'What does God want from me?' Or, 'How can I please God?' Of course, He has told us in both the Old and New Testaments that He wants us to love Him with all of our being, and to love others as ourselves. To put it another way, God wants people who hunger and thirst after Him, who seek to establish the proper relationship with Him and man. In Psalms 63.1 we read, 'O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.' These are the words of a man after God's own heart. We must work very hard on our relationships, for strong relationships are what make life meaningful, whether it be with our family, friends, business acquaintances, or God.

Circumcision was an outward sign of the relationship between Abraham and God, a relationship of complete faith. But Paul says in Romans 2.29, that the person who was physically circumcised was not really the chosen of God. Instead, that compliment was paid to those who had the kind of relationship with God that Abraham had. We need to 'thirst' for this kind of spiritual relationship.

In our present-day society, however, the term 'relationship' carries with it the connotation of a loose-knit association that make no real commitment. It is 'living together', and if things don't go quite right, we just end it. We seem to want the same thing in our spiritual lives. We want to be God's chosen in our own way without the burden of obedience, especially concerning things like baptism. But God wants a real, 'legitimate' relationship. He want us to commit ourselves fully, even to the extent of taking on His Son's name. And He definitely wants obedience. Paul tells us in Romans 3:20 that we can not gain salvation because of our works, but in Romans 3:3 he tells us that the law stands on the foundation on of the relationship of faith. In other words, we should want to obey because of our relationship to Him. How healthy and strong is our own relationship to God?