

In our search for what God really wants from us, I keep finding myself considering the scripture found many times in the Bible: 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' Also lately, I have been thinking about the kind of contract or covenant that we as Christians make with God. Most times, we think of a contract as a legal document that is drawn up with specific items that have been agreed to between two parties. This list of things to do is examined very carefully and then signed, and the contract is made. Nothing is required from either party except that which is stated in print.

But when I think of our contract with God, I see that it is essentially blank. Sure, there are some things given there that we are to do, but much more important than that is the clause that says that whatever he wants us to do that is not explicitly stated we must also do. We are simply to follow him, and obey him. This is more like an oath of loyalty to a king than a contract between two people. We are simply stating that we will do anything that he asks us to do.

It is hard for us to accept this. We certainly would not do it in our business lives. But now let us examine very closely Hebrews 8:8-10 ... Here I see that God has presented to man both types of covenants. The first type, with its typical list of rules to be obeyed, we know as the ten commandments, and the many other bylaws given to the people of Israel by God through Moses. But God says that that type of contract just did not work. A new covenant would be established that would be more oriented towards loyalty in the heart. If you remember your history, you know that Israel rejected God as king and demanded another. Thus, God sought for a people who would pledge to him as their king! He would be their God and they would be His people.

There are several personal instances of this kind of loyalty in the Bible, the willingness to respond immediately to the wish of the king. The prophets Samuel and Isaiah, we know, both presented themselves to God ready for service. One of my favorite stories is the time when David's three mighty men risked their lives because David wished for a drink of water. But I would like to examine with you an instance of this nature in the New Testament: Acts 9:3-6a... Here is a man who suddenly discovers the power of God, claims him as Lord, and then asks the crucial question: What do you want me to do? Because he was his Lord, he would have done anything at all!

God wants our love, our devotion, our loyalty. And of course this always must result in obedience or it means nothing. Do we have this kind of attitude? We need so badly to cultivate it.