

## WHAT DOES THE LORD YOUR GOD REQUIRE OF YOU?

After reading the Bible through once or twice a person should come to see that God's expectations for mankind have never changed. It is true that his laws have changed but the type of attitude and heart that he seeks has never changed.

For example, in Genesis 4:7, after Cain's sacrifice was rejected, God said, "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" Later, Moses told the Israelites very much the same thing, "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?" (Deuteronomy 10:12-13). Much later, Jesus answering a question about the greatest commandment said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment." (Matthew 22:37-38).

God has always wanted people to be faithful and loving. Once that happens, it is not a problem to walk in His ways or to serve Him with all our heart and soul, or to keep His commandments. I am not saying that it is always easy, but it is easier. In the same way that it is easier for some to sit for three hours watching a football game than to sit for half an hour listening to a gospel sermon. In the same way that it is easier to talk to strangers about politics than religion. In the same way that it is easier to spend more money on our hobbies than we put into the collection plate. Once we are dedicated to something, we have no trouble doing it.

We need to be dedicated to God before anything else. This is why David was considered such a great servant of God, though his sins were great. This is why Abraham was considered righteous. This is why the Apostle Paul changed his mind and followed Jesus. There are a whole host of people that are held up as great examples to us, and the single common factor is their dedication to God.

Are you dedicated to God first? I am not asking if you are dedicated to going to church. Nor am I asking if you are dedicated to Bible study. I am not even asking if you are dedicated to teaching people about Jesus. The Pharisees in the time of Jesus were dedicated to worship, they were dedicated to the Law, and they were dedicated to teaching (Matthew 23), but they were NOT dedicated to God.

What are you dedicated to?

**MJW**