

"WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF HIS PEOPLE."

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. To keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good."
Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

This text was spoken to the children of Israel by Moses, but all through the Bible we see that they are the words of the Lord and that He requires these things of His people in all ages. What He requires is nothing more than what is reasonable and right. All of His commands are wise and right. To be consistent with His righteousness and honor, He could not ask less. Nothing more is demanded than our thoughtful reason and enlightened consciences approve. What God requires is what thankful hearts should gladly give. What then does God require of His people?

1. God Requires Faith.

"To fear the Lord thy God."

The word "fear" in this text means "faith" or "trust". The Lord is eager that His people shall believe in Him, have faith in Him, and trust Him. His people must believe in the eternal purpose of God, have faith in the plan of God, and trust the providential acts of God. God requires faith. Have faith in God.

2. God Requires Reverence.

"To fear the Lord thy God."

We have only to know God in order to yield Him the reverence of our souls. If we could perceive His inherent majesty, His real excellence, and His unsullied purity, we should instinctively yield to Him the profoundest reverence of our hearts. Were it not for the corrupting influence of sin, this would be the natural result.

3. God Requires Loyalty.

"To walk in all His ways."

He wants us to go when He tells us, and to take the way He has prepared for us. The Lord reserves the right to lead His people. By virtue of His wisdom, He has a right to counsel. By virtue of His position as Monarch, He has a right to command. By virtue of His supremacy as Creator, He has claims on every part of our natures and on every moment of our time. His will is excellent, benevolent and unerring. To take His will for our chart and compass is not only our simplest duty but also our largest privilege. It should be the aim of every one of us to follow the Lord fully. He may lead where the way is rough, or where there is no water or food, or where fierce enemies may attack, but if the Lord leads every necessity will be abundantly provided. The Lord's people must walk in the way of justice, righteousness, holiness, benevolence and mercy. They must walk not only in His way but in all His ways. In His ways and with His leadership all may be happy and successful. His way is the way of righteousness, truth, peace and pleasantness. It is the only safe and elevating way.

4. God Requires Love.

"And to love Him."

Love is the germ in the heart that blossoms and bursts into all the fragrant fruits required by the Lord. That we can love at all is due to Him. The power to receive and cherish love is His gift. Hence, if we love at all, our love belongs to Him. If we love Him in proportion to benefits received, or to the worth of the object, or to the love expended on us, then all our love will center in the Lord. The Lord requires that His people love Him supremely. They are to love the Lord with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all their strength. Some people love pleasure, wealth, life, relatives, and other things more than they love the Lord. The servant of God must love God more than all else. When love for the Lord is supreme, it will naturally follow that love for the Bible, the Kingdom of God, the church, and worship will take a prominent place in the life. God requires love. Love Him supremely.

5. God Requires Service.

"And to serve the Lord thy God."

Genuine love will always seek some channel for its outflow, and service for love's object is a delight. It would be a restraint and a pain for love to be silent. She would justly count it bondage to be caged up within the heart. Conviction, principle, truth, sentiment, emotion, and love find their level in practical service as the waters of the river do in the sea. When people have faith in God and walk in His ways, and love Him supremely, they will desire to serve the Lord to the very best of their knowledge and ability. The wicked world sorely needs the service of the Lord's people in this hour. The hungry are to be fed, the thirsty must have water, the sorrowing should be comforted, the stranger needs to be entertained, the sick needs a helping hand, the prisoner needs encouragement, the sinner must be won to Christ, and the wayward needs to be brought back to God. The field is ripe unto harvest. The reapers are few. The Lord needs the fruitful service of His people.

6. God Requires Obedience.

"To keep the commandments of the Lord."

This reference here probably applies to the Ten Commandments, but as revelation came to its fulness other commandments were given to Christians. God requires obedience. His people must obey His will, and do His work in His way. His people are to love Him supremely, and to love their neighbors as themselves, and to proclaim the gospel to all people of all nations. Obey the commands of the Lord. It should be an easy yoke to love a God so kind, to fear a God so holy, and to serve and obey a God so faithful and true. To serve and obey Him means that we shall grow like Him. We imitate Him first in actions, then in disposition, then in purposes, then in character. The best evidence that we are Christians is in what we feel, suffer, sacrifice and do; not as servants obeying for reward, but as sons serving God out of affection.

Come to know the requirements of the Lord and then seek to live up to the fulness of the Lord's expectation for us at all times.