

# Is Your Family a Covenant Family?

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**Joshua 24:14–15 (NKJV) “Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! <sup>15</sup> And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

Who is YOUR God? I can hear most say, “The Lord is my God”. Of course, that is the answer everyone “expects”. Let me ask this question a different way: “Who REALLY is your God?” The answer to that question is not a statement but a lifestyle. Our “God” is the one we serve. Jesus said it this way: *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*<sup>1</sup>

We must choose whom we will serve. Servanthood is not a noun. It is not a title. Service is a verb. It is an action word. Serving God involves our life. It is revealed by our lifestyle. Our lifestyle is determined by the cumulative choices we make. What choices are you making with your life on a daily and weekly basis? We are not servants of God because we proclaim it. We are servants of God if we consistently choose to spend our time, talent, and treasure serving God. Unfortunately, many will proclaim their allegiance to God while betraying Him with their lifestyle.

Joshua declared his decision to serve God as a family. He called other families to make the same decision. God wants families to serve Him. Has your family made a quality decision to serve God—to REALLY serve God? Have you made God a priority in the choices you make as a family? Or is God an afterthought? Is serving God based on convenience or commitment? Families that do not make a quality decision to serve the Lord will find themselves not serving Him at all. The distractions and excuses of life will make sure of that. Those who do not serve the LORD teach their children by example not to serve the Lord, regardless of what they tell them. Children will pattern their lives after what they see us do, not what they hear us say. Many well-intentioned people will tragically find that their excuses and procrastination will testify against them when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Have you made a quality decision as a family to serve the Lord?

In addition to individuals and families, nations must choose to serve the Lord. When we think of a nation, we often think of the government. But nations are made up of its citizens. The sum total of the people of Israel had drifted from the Lord and begun to serve other gods. They were not foolish enough to deny the Lord verbally, but they were foolish enough to deny Him by becoming unfaithful to His covenant. The prophet Elijah challenged them to get off of the fence. They must choose to serve the LORD or else serve the false gods around them: *“And Elijah came to all the people, and said, ‘How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’”* But the people answered him not a word.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately the people remained silent. This is too often the case among God’s people today. They mistakenly think it is okay to remain neutral, to remain silent, to have the best of both worlds. Refusing to make a quality decision to serve the Lord is a decision to serve something else. Remaining on the fence is choosing not to be on the Lord’s side. Have you made a quality decision to follow and serve the LORD?

Choosing to serve the LORD is an act of covenant. God works through covenant relationships. The Bible is a covenant book. It is comprised of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant). What is a covenant? A covenant is an absolute commitment to a relationship based upon absolute terms. Blood covenants was the most binding. One common example of covenant is a marriage. Covenant establishes the priority of one relationship over another whereby one makes a conscious decision to “set” their love one specific individual (or people as in the case of God and His people): *“The Lord did not **set His love** on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; <sup>8</sup> but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you*

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 6:24 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 18:21 (NKJV)

from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> “Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; <sup>10</sup> and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.”<sup>3</sup> In the same way that the Lord has “set” His love upon us, so He wants us to “set” our love upon Him. The blessings of the Lord will come to those who do: “Because he has **set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name.**”<sup>4</sup>

God is working His plan in the earth through covenant. His covenant with Noah is one example. God is working His plan of redemption through covenant individuals such as with Abraham. God is working through a covenant nation, Israel such as with the Mosaic Covenant. God is working through covenant leaders such as with King David through the Davidic Covenant. God is working His plan of redemption through the New Covenant which was inaugurated through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Your family is important to God. God is working His plan in the earth through covenant families: “Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”<sup>5</sup> The Lord commanded families to teach and train their children to serve the Lord: “Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the Lord your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, <sup>2</sup> that you may fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. <sup>3</sup> Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ <sup>4</sup> “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! <sup>5</sup> You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”<sup>6</sup>

Apart from covenant families, covenant nations cannot exist. Neither can strong churches. People want to be connected to a strong church, but strong churches are only as strong as the sum total of the families in that church. The church is a covenant community: “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”<sup>7</sup>

It is time for individuals, families, nations, and churches to serve the Lord. Is your family a covenant family? Cleanse your life and home of competing priorities. Stop the procrastination. Make a covenant commitment today. “As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!”

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<sup>3</sup> Deuteronomy 7:7–10 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 91:14 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 12:1–3 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> Deuteronomy 6:1–9 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)