

February 2011 Link

What is on God's heart? Is it our sickness, our wealth, our health, our family, our church and all the things associated with it? While all of these things are important to our heavenly father, there may be more on His mind than we thought. The speakers at the Bi-vocational Pastors' retreat made me and many others do some thinking about this very matter. I wish that all of our pastors and staff could have been present to hear the teaching done at the retreat. Some of the statements made me say "that is right" and some made think about it a little more. In fact there are many things I am still thinking about today.

Let's look at Exodus 19:4-6. "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. Now if you will listen to Me and carefully keep My covenant, you will be My own possession out of all the peoples, although all the earth is Mine, and you will be My kingdom of priests and My holy nation. These are the words that you are to say to the Israelites."

If you read the verses preceding this and the ones following you will recall that God has called Moses to the mountain top to have a conversation with Him. Sometime I think I am in the lowest part of the earth when He speaks to me. Have you ever felt that way? It seems sometimes that we are at the lowest level of life before He can get our attention and before we are ready to listen. However, he took Moses to a lofty place to reach him. An earthquake, a fire, a wind storm, but God was not in them. He was in a still small voice. John Franklin asked this question. How can God not be in something He created? Makes one think doesn't it. He pointed out other instances where this same idea was presented.

What captures the attention here is the "Covenant" God makes with his people. It was pointed out at the Bi-Vo retreat that we want God's blessings without anything required on our part. I have always been intrigued by the agreements represented by the covenant. An animal was split in half and laid on the ground. Both parties of the covenant would walk through signifying their intention to keep the covenant. The carcass that was walked through meant that if either of the parties broke their part of the covenant, they would be as the sacrificed animal that had been placed on the ground. In other words death would be the result of a broken covenant. This is what Moses is trying to get the people to see relating to the covenant God has made with the people of Israel. Did the people keep his covenant? Not at all. We look at God as being a harsh, mean God, but we don't stop to think of the bonds placed on both parties of the covenant. Are you upholding your part of the covenant? Is the church upholding its part of the covenant? Remember the scripture points out that God is a jealous God. Let us remember that it is not God plus anything, but God ONLY.

The Ten Commandments follow in chapter 20 of Exodus. These are expressed as ten conditions of the covenant. The commandments are God's way of determining if we are keeping our part of the covenant. Today we only talk about the privileges of the covenant and not the accountability of the covenant.

The entire weekend revolved around prayer and how we might get into a position to really pray and have our prayers answered. If we are not in the right posture (I am not talking about standing, sitting, or even kneeling) to be heard, how can we be in a posture to hear from HIM?

Think about it. I am still pondering the thought of what I heard and what I have written in this article.