

## **'Love and Loyalty'**

If you have a genuine desire to go deeper in understanding who God is and what His kingdom is all about, you really need to understand these two concepts: Love and Loyalty.

**The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. 23 Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning. Lamentations 3:22-23 (NLT)**

**And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16**

**'God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.' 1 Corinthians 1:9**

God is Love and God is Loyal.

### **What is the value of loyalty to most people in general?**

To most people loyalty is mainly valued when it comes to financial benefits.

I believe that the commercial version of loyalty is not true loyalty. The same goes for love, or what people call 'love'.

When we choose to become followers of Jesus, we are not joining God's loyalty program. The kingdom of God is not like the kingdoms of our world.

### **Psalm 103:19**

**19 The Lord has established His throne in heaven,  
And His kingdom rules over all.**

**Jesus said: "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36**

### **1 Timothy 6:13-15**

**13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, 15 which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,**

### **In Revelation 19:16**

**And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:  
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

We often forget that we have a King!

We can trace the importance of love and loyalty back to Creation itself. Adam and Eve were disloyal toward God.

But God did not give up on humanity, He gave human beings a second chance.

Unfortunately, our world started falling into chaos, and God came very close to erasing humanity for good.

### **Genesis 6:5-8**

**5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.**

Once again God did not give up on humanity. God is love.

But we read in Genesis chapter 11 that soon after the flood episode, God was rejected by His own creation again!

At a certain point in time, the descendants of Noah decided to rebel against God, and not be loyal to Him anymore.

**14 Genesis 11:44 And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."**

This was in total disobedience to God's command for them to spread out across the earth. It was a display of human pride and arrogance.

So, once again, God was rejected by His creation, but still, He did not give up on Humanity. God called a man named Abram to follow Him, Abram was loyal to God.

### **Genesis 22:18**

**In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."**

GOD IS LOYAL!

**In Deuteronomy 7:9 we read:**

**9 "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;**

Love and Loyalty are themes that run throughout the entire Bible.

**What is the story of Job all about?** It's about one man's love and loyalty to God. The devil accused God of bribing Job with His blessings, but God proved him wrong.

**25 "But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and he will stand upon the earth at last.**

**26 And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God!**

**27 I will see him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes.**

**I am overwhelmed at the thought! Job 19:25-27 (NLT)**

When we continue reading throughout the entire Bible, we realise that God is most often the One demonstrating love and loyalty, often to people who were undeserving and had betrayed their covenant with Him.

**This pattern repeats itself over and over again.**

In fact, I see this pattern in many people's lives today. Their loyalty to God is divided.

The good news is that our God will always be faithful and loyal. This is His nature and God does not change.

**'If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.'**

**2 Timothy 2:13**

During His three years of ministry, Jesus reinforced the importance of Love and Loyalty. When one of the Pharisees asked Jesus, which is the great commandment of the Law, He replied:

**“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ Matt 22:36**

Jesus said to His disciples:

**15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments. John 14:15**

This speaks of love and loyalty.

On one occasion, after listening to one of Jesus' sermons many of His disciples were not so keen on following Him anymore.

**John 6:60;66**

**60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”**

**66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”**

In other words, what Jesus was saying is: are you going to be loyal to Me?

**One time, Jesus said to someone: “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:62**

Jesus also said:

**“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Matthew 7:21**

Now, let me bring your attention to someone in the Bible called Matthias.

The only time this man is mentioned in the Bible is in Acts chapter 1.

Do you remember that Judas betrayed Jesus? After Jesus ascended to heaven the apostles had to look for someone to replace Judas. So, as they were discussing this matter Peter mentioned a Psalm that prophesied about this.

**“For it is written in the Book of Psalms: ‘Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it and, ‘Let another take his office.’ Acts 1:20,23**

So, the apostles proposed two men for the position: Joseph and Mathias.

**23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, “You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.” 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.**

What I find very interesting in this episode, is to see what the criteria was for choosing an apostle to replace Judas. We find those requirements in verse 21 and 22.

**21 “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.”**

What were the apostles looking for? They were looking for **LOYALTY (faithfulness).**

They were looking for someone who had been with them faithfully from beginning to end!

From this point forward loyalty towards Jesus was going to be crucial for all believers.

**Acts 5:27-29**

**27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!”**

**29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.**

Love and Loyalty to God are at the foundation of our Christian faith.

### **GOD REWARDS LOYALTY**

**John 12:26**

**26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour.**

In the book of **Revelation 2:10**, Jesus said to the Church in Ephesus **“But if you remain faithful even when facing death, I will give you the crown of life.” (NLT)**

God is looking for people on earth who are loyal to Him.

**2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. (...)**

Three points for you to remember:

- 1. God loves you (love Him back)**
- 2. God is loyal (be loyal to Him)**
- 3. Serve God (He will reward your loyalty).**

