



## GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

Topic: God's love

Release date: April 4, 2017

### A COVENANT OF LOVE

*And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. Romans 8:28*

The reflections of an old man who senses that death is near are always meaningful. Such were the words of Moses who reflected on a life of challenge and who wrote, "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands" (Deuteronomy 7:9).

First—Moses called God "the faithful God." And what does *faithful* really mean? Simply put, it means that the one who promises something performs—not because of the praise he gets, not because of the money or reward he might get in return, but because of the integrity of His heart. His nature compels Him to keep His Word.

What a contrast to the relationships we have with people—sometimes those with whom you do business, sometimes your friends, sometimes even the one who stood by your side at a marriage altar and pledged to be by your side until death should separate you.

Moses called what God had committed to do "a covenant of love," understanding that we as mortals could never repay God for His kindness and acts of mercy. But we often lose sight of the fact that the blessings of God have two conditions: (1) we who are blessed by His kindness love Him, and (2) we keep His commandments."

It's very much the same thing that Paul wrote to the church at Rome some 1400 years later. Remember the often-quoted verse found in Romans 8:28 that goes, "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them" (Romans 8:28)?

In relationship to God, love and obedience go hand in hand—like two sides of the same coin. For a few moments let's focus on those two pre-requisites to blessing. First, you will never really love someone until you overcome your fear of that person. As long as you think of God as an angry deity, a cosmic policeman with a big stick who is out to get you, or as an old senile gray-bearded man who would like to help you out but just can't quite get it together, you will never know Him.

Should the attitudes I've just mentioned be even a slight reflection as to how you view God, you don't know the God of the Bible. You are being stopped by a caricature that the world has of God. The Bible says He is a loving Father, and Moses refers to what He promises to do as a "covenant of love."

Once you really know God, you will love Him, and when you love Him, you will find it easy to comply with His demands. And when you do that, you begin to walk in obedience to what God wants, trusting the Father's heart when you cannot see His hand.

When I was a boy, Packard Motor Company used to advertise, "Ask the man who owns one!" That was the way they promoted the quality of their car. Just listen to the person who drives one!

Thomas Chisholm embodied the testimonies of generations of men and women who embraced this God who keeps covenants, writing, "Great is Thy faithfulness, O God, my Father! There is no shadow of turning with thee; Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not. As thou has been thou forever wilt be."

There is only one way to experience His faithfulness and that is to trust Him, to embrace His direction and demands and to love Him. Then you too can say with Paul, "The one who calls you is faithful... He cannot deny Himself."

**Resource reading: Lamentations 3**