

INCLINE YOUR HEART UNTO THE LORD

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.”

Joshua 24:23, 24

Joshua was calling God’s people to a renewed commitment to serve and obey the Lord.

They responded by pledging to serve God, after which Joshua gave them the charge we find in our text. Joshua challenged them to “incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.” How often we see in the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, reference made to the importance of our hearts. Our hearts must be inclined toward the Lord, and we have the responsibility to incline our hearts. If we are being alert and sensitive to our spiritual condition, we can sense when our hearts are being inclined toward the Lord or away from the Lord. We have a duty, an obligation, to incline our hearts in a godly direction. How is it that we might do this?

First of all, Joshua commanded the people to “put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD.” Before they would be able to incline their hearts toward the Lord, they would first have to put away from their lives the objects of idolatry that were present. The same is true for us. We will not be able to incline our hearts toward the Lord when we have things in our lives that naturally incline our hearts in another direction.

The reason our hearts need to be inclined toward the Lord is because we have allowed our hearts to be drawn toward other things. What is it that we have tolerated

in our lives that distracts us from God and His will? Perhaps it is leisure activities, or the pursuit of wealth or worldly success. Maybe it is prideful resistance to some part of God's will for your life. Could it be selfishness about your time and being unwilling to surrender your all to the Savior? Until these things are removed, the heart will not be inclined toward the Lord as it should be.

The people then responded by saying, "his voice will we obey." In order to keep our hearts inclined toward the Lord, we must not only remove the things that distract, but also, we must maintain a sincere commitment to obey the Word of God. If we will turn from besetting sins, and love the things of God, our hearts will be inclined toward Him.