

God Sets the Terms

One feature deserves special notice. The almighty Creator of all things doesn't leave the terms of his covenants to the whims and fancies of our imagination. The Lord in his own wisdom sets the boundaries of blessing and responsibility in his covenants.

Adam didn't say, “Lord, I like the freedom you've given me to eat from all these different kinds of trees. I'm even willing to do a little gardening here and there. But I won't agree to your proposals so long as you deny me the privilege of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” He didn't try to bargain with God, because he understood that divine covenants are sovereignly administered. The Lord alone sets the terms of his bonds with men. So may it ever be. God alone determines the bounds of the activities of his creation.

In sum: A covenant may be defined as *a bond in blood sovereignly administered*. Life and death are at stake in the divine covenants. God has bound himself to humans and them to himself. Life in your soul, blessing in your family, prosperity in your work and the course of the world — all these matters hinge on the provisions of God's covenants. Your personal peace (in the Hebrew sense of “total blessedness”) will derive only from your walking and believing in the ways of his covenants.

(O. Palmer Robertson, *Covenants: God's Way With His People*, Suwanee, Georgia: Great Commission Publications, 2008 [1987], 10-11; Excerpt from Chapter 1, *The Covenant: A Bond in Blood*)