

# Our God and His People

*"I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.'  
I will say to those called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people';  
and they will say 'You are my God.' "*

**Hosea 2:23b**

## Introduction:

Imagine a world where this is true – not only a world where this is true in general, but a world where you personally can say that these are true statements:

God's words are our words.

His heart is our heart.

His desire is our desire.

His peace is our peace.

His purpose is our purpose.

His passion is our passion.

His vision is our vision.

His persistent love is our persistent love.

His forgiveness is our forgiveness.

His presence is our presence.

His blessing is our blessing.

His mercy is our mercy.

His will is our will.

**He is our God; we are his people!**

The statement from God that "*I will be your God, and you will be my people*" is referred to in the Bible as the **Covenant**. A covenant, in general, is an agreement or promise between two people or groups of people. There are, of course, lots of covenants. This particular covenant, God's covenant, has two promises: "*I will be your God, and you will be my people.*" It is one of the most often repeated thoughts in all of Scripture, and is one of my favorite topics.<sup>1</sup> These are God's words, and he wants them to be our words. God says these words repeatedly in the Bible. He seems to want us to hear clearly, above all of the other loud and negative voices constantly bombarding us, that he wants to be our God and he wants us to be his people. And he seems to want us to say these words also, to confirm that covenant by also saying clearly, repeatedly, and with assurance that he is our God and we are his people.

God's Words and Our Words.

Here's a simple question: which is more important, God's words or our words? God's words, of course. But in this case, God's words are not actually helpful to you unless they become your words.

In some ways, this covenant promise is the story of the Bible. In fact, God's Word is sometimes referred to as *The Book of the Covenant* (*Exodus 24:7; 2 Kings 23:2, 21; 2 Chronicles 34:10*). However, our appreciation for God's covenant promises is only as deep as our appreciation for God himself. If you're not in awe of God, you will not be impressed with his promise to be your God. That's why you often hear me quote one of my favorite sayings outside of the Bible:

*What comes into our minds when we think about God  
is the most important thing about us.*

A.W. Tozer<sup>2</sup>

At the **heart** of the covenant promise found here in *Hosea* and in the multitude of times it is repeated throughout Scripture is knowing who God is and who we are as a result of who he is. The **strategy** of living out that covenant involves believing God's promises found here and dedicating ourselves to proclaim and apply our promises, devoting the rest of our lives to our covenant with him. And, by the way, it is also the fundamental description of our life in heaven for the rest of eternity: He will be our God, and we will be his people (*Revelation 21:3,7*).

On a personal and practical level, what comes to your mind when you hear God saying "*I will be your God*"? \_\_\_\_\_

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**1. First, the bad news – the tragedy and misery of what it's like to not be God's people.**

This bad news is, unfortunately, the main focus of what God reveals to us in the book called *Hosea*. It's not fun or easy reading. The backdrop of that tragedy, though, is the offer God makes in the covenant.

In essence, God is making an offer in the covenant promises. It's like he's saying: "*Here's the deal: I will be your God, and you will be my people.*"

An offer that's "*too good to be true*" usually isn't true. But this one is.

It's an offer that "*you can't refuse*" – but sadly, most people do.

But let's be clear: God isn't making this offer to people who are already perfect. And if you're not one of those people, there's nothing you can do about it. As stated in this verse in *Hosea*, this offer is to people who are unloved and rejected.

**Unloved and Rejected**

Those were the tragic names of two of the children in the ancient story of *Hosea*. Those are the names that God is describing in our theme verse (*Hosea 2:23b*) as the names he is reversing. The story of *Hosea* and his family is the story of the God who changes our names.

The name change is such great news, but to grasp how amazing that is, we first need to face the tragedy of the bad news. Those two names are absolutely horrible.

I cannot imagine what it would have been like for these two children, almost 3000 years ago, to be called "*Not Loved*" and "*Not My People*." Unloved and Rejected. Yes, their names were changed and they had a story, a testimony of what it is like to be renamed by God. But the truth remains that the life of being unloved and rejected is a miserable and tragic situation.

And that true story is a perfect description of our lives. I'm not trying to be dramatic or paint an inaccurate picture – you know how some commercials try to show you how bad your life is before they try to sell you their product. But you know and I know, we all know what it's like to feel unwanted and unloved. And when you think about the lives of people around you, you know that this is what they have experienced also. We may not want to admit it, but it is what is probably at the heart of the things that most people do that annoy us. There are some people that are easy to love, right? Then there are other people . . . well, let's just say there are some who are not so easy to love. A good question to consider is: have I made it easy for God to love me? The story of *Hosea*, and really the whole Bible, is the story of God's persistent love for people who have not made it easy to love. As hard as it may be at times for us to admit it, those "*annoying people*" are probably feeling unloved and rejected, and God is making this offer to them. A test of our faith and love

sometimes involves our willingness to accept God's offer for ourselves, and sometimes it involves our willingness to let God make that offer to others.

### **The Worst Part of Being Unloved and Rejected**

And one last piece of misery before we look at the good news: this experience of unloved and rejected is not just about our relationships with other people, it is also a description of our relationship with God. It was, after all, God who told Hosea to name these children with those tragic names (*Hosea 1:6 – 9*). Yes, again, it is he who has the plan to reverse those names, but he was the one who came up with them in the first place.

Of course, it was not because God wants us to be unloved and rejected. That is totally the opposite of his desire and plan for us. It is because we have rejected him. Whether it was a result of just not knowing God, or it was a result of deliberately rejecting him, we all know the misery of what it is like to feel unloved and rejected – by God. That's the bad news. But the good news, as we will see, is that God helps us use our negative, even miserable, experiences to help us come to a realization of what we really want, which is also what he really wants – and that is for him to be our God and for us to be his people.

How does it feel to you to be unloved and rejected – by other people, and by God? \_\_\_\_\_

## **2. The good news of having him as our God and being his people.**

The blessings of who we become because of who he is; the blessings of what we receive because he is our God; the blessings we have because we are his people.

What you do is not the same thing as who you are. What you have is not the same thing as who you are. What others think of you is not who you are. Who you are, if you are in this covenant relationship with God, is: **YOU ARE GOD'S PEOPLE**. Or if you are not yet in that covenant relationship, this is what God wants you to become.

Let's focus on just two of those blessings, and you can spend time later focusing on others.

### **Peace and Purpose**

- 1) Because God is the God of **peace**, his people are also people of peace. People at peace with God, at peace with themselves, and instruments of peace towards others.

Have you heard about the *Swedish Prescription*?<sup>3</sup> The county of Sweden is describing itself as a place to come to find peace.



The peace of having God as our God and being his people is much better than that. Do you hear God saying to you: *let me be the God, and you will have incredible peace from letting me handle that position?*

- 2) Because God is the God of **purpose**, his people are also people of purpose. They have a reason for living; they know what that reason is; and they live every day in view of that purpose.

I don't know about you,  
but sometimes I need  
reassurance of my  
purpose in life.  
It really encouraged me  
recently when I was told  
that I have unique and  
amazing gifts. Granted, it  
was a church billboard  
that told me that, but it  
still encouraged me.



The point is, though, that this is true for everyone who is one of God's people. Do you hear God saying to you: *because you are one of my people, you have an important purpose in life?*

This is the missing piece in a life that is insecure, anxious, and unfulfilled. Not working harder at improving your life by trying to be all you can be – but accepting God's offer of letting him be the all-powerful, loving God, and accepting the amazing blessings that come as a result of being one of his people. And that's really what the church family is all about – not the structure or programs or buildings or sacrifices, but the heart of being God's people who acknowledge Him as God.

You will sometimes feel disconnected and even unmotivated about doing church stuff, but if you frequently meditate on your covenant with God, He will never make you feel unloved or rejected.

How does it feel to have the blessing of peace that comes from having the God of peace as your God and to have the blessing of purpose that comes from being one of the people of the God of purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTE:** Appreciating the good news of being God's people begins with a realization of how bad the bad news is of not being His people. That is what God said in the days of Hosea (*Hosea 5:15b*):

*In their misery they will earnestly seek me.*

God has no interest in making us miserable. He takes no pleasure in our pain. But we all know that sometimes we have to be sick and tired of being miserable before we will take the steps necessary to come out of that misery.

How has "misery" played a role in motivating you to seeking God? \_\_\_\_\_

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## CONCLUSION:

This is what God desires for us. He wants to be our God, he wants us to be his people. That is what we really desire also. It's not always true that what I want is exactly what God wants. But this is one of those rare occasions. God wants to be our God, and he wants us to be his people. We want to be his people, and we want him to be our God. We want the same thing God wants; God wants the same thing we want.

We want, and God wants it to be true that:

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**He is our God; we are his people!**

What stands out to you from the list given above. (It is not an exhaustive list; you might think of other statements to add to it. But it does describe some of what it means to have Him as our God and to be His people.) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Suggestions:** For the next week, start each day hearing God say "*You are my people*" and saying to him "*You are my God.*" Try to remember that throughout the day and act accordingly. Then, close each day with a reflection on how it impacted your day.

After 1 week of doing that, write your observations. \_\_\_\_\_

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*John Sullivan*  
**October 2025**

## Footnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> For more details, see the study "*The Covenant God and His Covenant People*" available at [www.d4yp.com](http://www.d4yp.com).
- <sup>2</sup> *The Knowledge of the Holy*, by A.W. Tozer.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Swedish Prescription*, <https://visitsweden.com>



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