

EVANGEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (PCA)

2040 N. WESTRIDGE, WICHITA, KS 67203

(316) 942-5882

E-Mail Address: church@evangelpca.org

Web Page: [Http://www.evangelpca.org](http://www.evangelpca.org)

Sunday Worship 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM

Senior Pastor: Donald W. Rackley

Associate Pastor: Tim Rackley

July/August

2009

Volume 21 No. 7/8

A Heart That Pursues God's Approval

Joel 2:12-17

The purpose of the book of *Joel* is to challenge the people of God to move out of their indifference and apathy and burn with fervor towards God. There's a lesson here for us. The greatest peril we face today is not extremism but moderatism. I do not mean moderation, the scriptures teach this. Moderation is the avoiding of excess. But for the moderatist the middle of the road is the place to be. Avoid taking a position when possible. If you must take a position it cannot be allowed to in any way cause you concern or cost you resources or energy.

Moderatism stands with the crowd at Mount Carmel while Elijah cries, "How long halt ye between two opinions? And answers not a word." The moderatist occupies the middle of the road and that's a poor place to walk or drive or live.

The Lord gets no glory from the moderatist and the church gains no strength. God was not satisfied when Israel left their practices of idolatry. He would be pleased only when they lived for Him. God complained, "This people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me and their reverence for Me consists of traditions that are empty."—Isaiah 22:13

The heart is viewed in scripture as the center of our being. "From out of the heart flow the issues of life." In Deuteronomy 5:27 the people of Israel were terrified when God spoke to them. They said to Moses, "Go near and listen to all that the Lord our God says. Then tell us whatever the Lord our God tells you. We will listen and obey." So Moses later told them, "The Lord heard you when you spoke to me and the Lord said to me, 'I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good; O that their hearts would be inclined to fear Me and keep all My commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever'."—Deuteronomy 5:29

The problem of the lukewarm believer or moderatist is double mindedness. But it doesn't begin in the mind. Jesus states the problem in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and riches."

In Matthew 6:21 Jesus said, "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." We must ask ourselves, what do we treasure; pleasure, wealth, recognition, ease or do we treasure God's approval. The Lord brought this subject to bear on the church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-19.

The problem begins when we rebel against God's sovereign place in our lives. We do so to accommodate our appetites. As Eve and then Adam turned from the Lord and submission to His word, so do we. Then we become double minded and unstable in all our ways and therefore unpredictable and undependable.

People used to look to us for counsel, for help, for encouragement, but no more; because we're not dependable in spiritual matters. We're now double minded and we will receive nothing from the Lord because we cannot.—James 1:2-8

The qualification for receiving God's benefits is submission. God will not reveal His will to you so that you can vote on it and He will not trust you with His work if something else is just as important to you as His approval. A divided allegiance is worldliness.

The lukewarm person does not become greatly disturbed at hearing heretical teaching and is not vigorous in defense of the truth. The spirit of indifference is the most tragic thing that can happen in a church.

James challenges the double minded person, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners and purify your hearts you double minded."—James 2:8 Cleanse your hands refers to outward conduct. Purify your hearts refers to inner motives. A pure heart yearns for God's approval. God said, "O that their hearts would be inclined to fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever."