

Wholehearted Devotion

If we know one thing about our God, it is that He cannot tolerate lukewarmness. "*I wish you were either hot or cold,*" he says. Just don't be lukewarm. For Paul, living in a right way before God was to show Him undivided devotion. **1 Corinthians 7:35** God loved Caleb because, as God put it, *he has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly.* **Numbers 14:24**

We want to be people who love the Lord wholeheartedly, don't we? In our sung worship time to follow, we'll be taking a look at how our pursuit of God can fall short, and see some examples of that. Then we'll see from the church at Thessalonica what wholehearted devotion looks like when lived out in a group of believers.

Shake This Place

We see the heart of God in our text today, when referring to Israel, he says **"all day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.** Listen to how the dictionary defines obstinate.

Determined not to agree with other people's wishes or accept their suggestions, unwilling to change or give up something such as an idea or attitude. Difficult to control, get rid of, solve, or cure.

So how did they get this reputation with God? The prophet Malachi tells us one specific way.....

A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?'

"You place defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible. When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty. "Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?"-says the LORD Almighty.

"Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands.

My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty.

PRAYER

Lord, it is easy to sit here and cluck our tongues at those rebellious Israelites, and not to see our own sin. Down deep we know that we are no different. We give you half-hearted worship, we offer you leftovers, we give you time if it fits in with our schedule. We admit our half-hearted faith. Our fervor and zeal has cooled off to a tepid temperature, and we're not even concerned about it. Turn up the burner on our faith this morning, Lord. Even as we are sitting here, bring us to a full boil, to the end that our lives bring you glory and not shame. Amen

For The Glory Of Your Name

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.

*Now these things occurred as examples
to keep us from setting our hearts
on evil things as they did.*

Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry. We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if

you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

A moment of quiet congregational reflection **I Surrender All**

Paul, Silas and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you.

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.

You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us.

They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

We choose to bow

OFFERING
Strength Of My Heart

