

Does Joe Love God?

by Robert F. Turner

Joe Doakes really loves God — he stoutly affirms every time some nose person asks why he did not worship on Sunday. He can not understand why anyone would think differently and suspects their “seeming” interest in him must be a self-righteous covering for hypocrisy. If they would leave him alone, he could act on his own. He would worship God regularly — *maybe*.

It has been many months since Joe gathered for prayer with the saints. He says some of those “church-tied” ninnyes seem to think the church building is the only place where one can talk to God. Of course he doesn’t pray at home — *but he could*.

Joe says worship must be directed to God and a fellow’s clothes have nothing to do with it. Joe doesn’t notice how others are dressed. He is wondering what they think of him. They are probably snickering at his out-of-date suit when they should be thinking about God. If he had a new suit he would likely resume his place in public worship — after waiting a few months to wear off the newness. You know how some people are — notice all the clothes in the house.

Love God? Serve God? What ridiculous questions! Everyone should know that he loves God and wants to serve God. Why are people always pushing him around? His wife is always saying, “Do this!” His friend asks, “Joe, will you help me here?” And the boss yells, “Finish that job!” No one is going to push Joe Doakes around!

But Joe listens to his wife for he loves her and wants to make her happy. And Joe helps his friend because he appreciates and needs him. And Joe listens to his boss because he wants his praise, and a raise, and “lest he be fired.” Joe submits himself to these because he believes it is to his best interest to do so. Reexamine Joe’s thinking, and you see, with thoughts always turned inward, he judges others on the basis of his own standards. He has not yet learned that to save his life, he must lose it (Matt. 10:39). Joe does not love and serve God. He has chosen to love and serve himself (Matt. 6:24).

— *via Stuff About Things, p. 39*

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