

What Would Jesus Undo? Msg 1  
Indifference  
Sermon preached by Dr. Rick Mandl  
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Hey, welcome today to everybody . . . .

I am very excited that you're with us as we're launching a brand-new message series.

This evening we're going to be spending most of our time in Revelation chapter 3, and so I'd encourage you to open up your Bible or your Bible app to Revelation 3:14-22.

Pretty easy to find because Revelation is the last book of the Bible . . . .

As I mentioned we're beginning a new series and as I introduce this series to you I'm going to put an image up on the screen and I'd be interested in knowing . . .

**(W.W.J.D. Bracelet)**

**How many of you have ever seen one of these?**

**How many of you owned one?**

**How many of you still have one?**

**How many of you have no idea what I'm talking about?**

For those who are in the dark here, back in the 1990's there was a craze that swept the nation where people wore a simple bracelet with the four letters **WWJD** on it.

The letters were to remind people, that in any situation they found themselves in, they should ask the question - **What Would Jesus Do?**

That phrase actually came from the book

**In His Steps**, written by **Charles Sheldon in 1896**.

In the book there is a pastor, Rev. Henry Maxwell, who challenges the people in his church to follow in the steps of Jesus.

And the way he encouraged them to do that was in every situation they faced, he encouraged them to ask one question, **What Would Jesus Do?**

The book follows a few people who do this, and it shows how their lives, and their world, was turned upside down.

**That simple question** is a good one and it can help us think about what it means to follow Jesus in different situations.

But what I want to do in this message series, is ask a question that is tied to that question, but one that's a little bit different.

**Not What Would Jesus Do?**

**What Would Jesus Undo?**

What are the things, that as we look at the **RED LETTERS** in your Bible,

Those **RED LETTERS** are the **Words Of Jesus**.

What were the things that really broke his heart?

What are the things that bothered him?

What are the things that created a real sense of dissatisfaction within him?

What was it that Jesus saw, that he could not stand, and that he would undo?

For the next few weeks, we're going to talk about several of those things – hence the title . . .

**What would Jesus undo?**

The first one we find in a letter from Jesus to one of the seven churches in Revelation 2-3

This is his letter to the church at Laodicea and we find it in

**Revelation 3:14-22**

**14 "Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's new creation:**

**15 "I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! 16 But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!**

**17 You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**

**18 So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see.**

**19 I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference. 20 “Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.**

**21 Those who are victorious will sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat with my Father on his throne. 22 “Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches.”**

**AMEN!**

What was happening in that church to which Jesus was writing that he would UNDO?

In a word, what was happening was . . .

**Indifference**

**Spiritual Indifference.**

Look again, at those first two verses at the top of your notes . . .

Revelation 3:15-16

There, Jesus, the one who is writing this letter is saying, “I know you”

***“I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth! Revelation 3:15-16***

The problem in the church in Laodicea is that they weren’t hot

They weren’t cold.

They were lukewarm.

They weren’t on fire for the Lord.

They weren’t opposed to the Lord.

Over time they had just become sort of Spiritually Indifferent.

It happened to them and it happens to a lot of people.

Indifference

Spiritual Indifference.

What causes . . . .

**The Causes Of Spiritual Indifference**

There can be a lot of causes, let me share two with you . . .

The first one is . . . .

**1. SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

Or to be more accurate, “The Illusion of Self-sufficiency”

What do I mean by self-sufficiency?

Maybe this Pepsi commercial from the Super Bowl from a couple of years back can help you understand what I’m talking about.

Watch and listen . . .

**“I’m Good” – Pepsi Commercial**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUZaSf7T7ig>

In case you missed it, after each one of those guys got injured, what did they say?

**“I’m Good!”**

There is something about us, that causes us, even when we’re not good, to say **“I’m good!”**

I’m at the checkout line at the grocery store, and I’ve got a cart that is overloaded, and the cashier asks **“Can I get someone to help you out to your car?”**

And my response, **“I’m good!”**

And then of course, those things fall out of my cart on my way to the car.

When I need somebody to help me, and somebody offers to help me, my default response is **“I’m good.”**

This same thing happens spiritually.

**“Can I help you with that Spritual Burden?”**

**“No, I’m good.”**

**“Can I help you with that addiction?”**

**“No! I’m good. And don’t judge me.”**

In this letter Jesus is talking to an entire church that has got a bad case of **“I’m good.”**

**Now quick show of hands. . . .**

**How many of you feel like this is something you need to hear today?**

Okay, about ½ of you and the rest of you are saying **“I’m good!”**

Whether we want to admit it or not, there’s a tendency among all of us to feel like, **everyone else here might need some spiritual help**, but me . . . not so much!

**“I’m good!”**

**“I’m okay.”**

**“I’m fine the way I am.”**

The **problem** with the **“I’m good”** attitude is that it

- **Cools your spiritual passion.**
- **It encourages an attitude of pride**
- **And it cuts off any possibility for spiritual growth.**

If you want to keep growing as a Christian you have to be able to say **“I’m not good.”**

**“I need help.”**

If you can’t say that then you can’t grow.

To the spiritually indifferent members at the church of Laodicea, Jesus wrote . . .

**“You say, ‘I am rich. I have everything I want. I don’t need a thing!’**

But you know what?

You’re not good . . .

**And you don’t realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.”**

**Revelation 3:17**

**Their spiritual indifference** was caused by their **illusion of “Self-Sufficiency.”**

They had grown blind to their need for Jesus because they felt like they had everything they needed, even without him.

A second cause of Spiritual Indifference is . . . .

## **2. DISTRACTIONS of this world**

What causes spiritual indifference?

We’re just simply distracted.

Jesus told a parable about a farmer who was planting.

He was scattering some seed out, and some of the seed was starting to take root and to grow, but in Mark 4:19 Jesus said,

**“The seed cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the kingdom news but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The stress strangles what they heard, and nothing comes of it.” Mark 4:19 (MSG)**

This is the story for a lot of people

They **hear the word**, they’re **challenged**, they’re **moved**, they’re **prompted**, they’re **stirred by something spiritually** and suddenly there **starts to be this spiritual life**, and then suddenly **life just happens!**

The **kid gets sick**, the **car breaks down**, **someone is in need**, **one of the kids did something wrong** and needs to be disciplined.

And there are **bills to pay** and there are **dishes to do**

And **life gets in the way** and it chokes out the Word.

It’s **not like we don’t care**, we just got distracted.

We’re looking at Jesus and then all the stuff that happens, just kinda came in, we got overwhelmed.

I still kinda love Jesus, I’m just tired right now.

All over the world today, especially in our part of the world, there are so many people **who have a little bit of Jesus.**

**Just enough** to help them maybe **feel good about eternity.**

They **prayed a prayer** or they **were baptized when they were a kid.**

Maybe they’ll **go to church every now and then**, and **when they do, they feel better about myself.**

They’ll **do something to help somebody who’s in need.**

Just enough to give them some sense of comfort and security, but not so much that it causes us to grieve over our own sinfulness, and inspires us to pursue Jesus every single day.

Just enough to make us feel better about ourselves, but not so much that it truly changes us.

### What would Jesus undo?

Lukewarm indifference because Lukewarm indifference didn't just break his heart.

It turned his stomach.

It made him wanna vomit.

How do we know if we're living with this type of indifference?

I've put together a list of seven things in your notes . . .

### **Seven Indicators Of Spiritual Indifference**

The first one, if you're taking notes is . . .

#### **1. Being more concerned with IMPRESSING PEOPLE than living for GOD**

We're more concerned with what everybody else thinks.

*Am I popular, do I blend in, do you like my hair, do you like my shoes, do you like the music that I listen to?*

#### *Do you like me?*

We're so obsessed with what people think - - we forget about what God thinks.

It's not that those who are Spiritually Indifferent don't understand what the Bible says about not being **CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD**

*(**"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think."** Romans 12:2))*

It's just that. . .

**They want to fit in.**

**They want people to like them,**

**They don't want to be thought of as a religious fanatic** because **then people won't them**

So **instead of doing what God wants**, they **do what's popular**, they **do what's acceptable**

Because they **really care what people think** more than what God thinks,

Jesus warned us about this. . .

He said . . .

***"Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you..." Luke 6:26***

If everyone speaks well of you, it may be because you're not really following Jesus, but instead are living for the approval of people, rather than living from the approval of God.

A second characteristic of someone who is Spiritually Indifferent is that they

#### **2. Being more obsessed with LIFE ON EARTH rather than ETERNITY**

Why?

Because that's what life is all about right?

It's about our stuff, our house, our car, our yards, our image, our jobs, our bank account, our 401k

And if you ever want to see a lukewarm Christian freak out, just watch the economy go down and watch them panic.

Why?

Because you're messing with their way of life.

It's all about their standard of living, isn't it?

Not about heaven.

They're consumed with life – life on Earth and not eternity in Heaven.

There is a guy in the Bible named Paul.

He said something crazy.

Do you know what he said? He said,

***"For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better."* Philippians 1:21**

It's **easy to get caught up in the things God created**, and **ignore the one who created them**.

We don't want to die, because if we do, we think only about the things we're leaving behind, and not about the things we're going to gain.

A third indicator of spiritual indifference . . .

#### **3. Rationalizing SIN and living without truly fearing GOD**

We **rationalize** sin.

In our culture, we **rename** it to make it something not as bad, right?

It's **not adultery**, it's **an affair**.

It's **not pornography**, it's **adult entertainment**.

We give it a better name.

We rationalize our sin, without truly fearing God.

Fourth characteristic . . .

#### 4. **BELIEVING** in Jesus, but rarely **SHARING** my faith

You look at that and you wonder "Why?"

Why would someone believe in Jesus but not share their faith?

It could be a lot of reasons . . . .

They don't want to be **weird**, they don't want to be **rejected**, they don't want to **offend people**.

I think the bottom line **they really don't believe that Jesus is necessary for salvation**.

They know what the Bible says about Jesus being

**(the ONLY WAY – John 14:6)**

They may even have committed the verse to memory.

Intellectually **they might say they believe that**, but in their heart they **hold on to the hope** that **if their friend**, their **neighbor**, their **family member** is just good enough, that will get them into heaven.

They know that **talking about Jesus is very controversial** so they **hope maybe their LIFE occasionally will be a witness** but they're **not going to talk about Jesus** – cuz that would be weird.

When they read passages in Scripture like the words of the Apostle Paul who said . . .

***"My life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God." Acts 20:24***

They rationalize their own silence by saying . .

**"That was Paul.**

He was an apostle.

**That's not me,**

And that's **not what God expects** from ordinary Christians."

Even though Jesus said . . .

***"Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven."*** **Matthew 10:32-33.**

A fifth characteristic of a Lukewarm Christian is that they . . .

#### 5. Only **TURN** to **GOD** when I **NEED SOMETHING**

Because **when things are going good**, who really needs God? The **weather is good**, the **kids are healthy**, **nobody is fighting**, we've **got money to pay the bills**.

***I'm good!***

**God becomes a tool in their toolbox** - - - and when they're in a bind, they pull him out.

When the **economy goes south**,

When **my marriage gets tough**,

When **someone has cancer**, I'll **pull out my God tool**,

But **when everything is okay** they **don't really need God** so their God tool, goes back in the box and they'll turn to him again later when they're in a bind.

They **believe in God**, and **will use him for their benefit**, but they are **not in a daily relationship with him** because a lukewarm Christian will call on God only when they need something.

**A sixth characteristic** of a Lukewarm Christian

#### 6. Only **GIVING** when it doesn't **HINDER** my **STANDARD** of **LIVING**

It's **not that** a lukewarm Christian **never gives**, it's just that they **only give** when it **doesn't hinder** their standard of living.

Here's an **INTERESTING STAT**.

The **Lukewarm Christian will give**, but the **Lukewarm Christian doesn't give as much as the Non-believer** because studies show that **those who aren't Christians are actually more generous** than many Christians when it comes to giving.

Which when you think about it is **one of the saddest commentaries** on Christians that I could think of

That **we would be more stingy**. . .

That we would **give every now and then** as long as it doesn't hinder our standard of living because we've **got to have our cars** that we're in debt for, and **our bigger houses** and **nicer things** and all this stuff, because that's what life is all about, so we'll give if we have some left over but only if it doesn't hurt.

But don't ask us to sacrifice ever, because my stuff is my stuff,

It's my money, my things, my, my, my, my, my my, my.

The committed follower of Jesus realizes it's God's, God's, God's, God's, God's.

But the lukewarm Christian says, "My, my, my, my my."

We don't like to talk about that kind of stuff because that's my business and not yours, stay out of that subject.

And then number 7 to sum it all up . . .

The Lukewarm Christian

**7. Wanting the BENEFITS of what Christ did without CONFORMING to who He is.**

That's the heart of it.

That's the root of it.

I want enough of Jesus to keep me out of hell, and get me into heaven, but not so much as to change my life.

Cuz my life is my life.

"Give me all the good stuff, but **I don't want to become like Jesus.**"

And yet God's plan has always been to grow us up to look more and more like Jesus.

God's plan from the very beginning . . . Romans 8:29

***"God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."***

***Romans 8:29***

Wanting the benefits of what Christ did, without conforming to who He is.

The Lukewarm Christian.

Let me ask you a question . . .

As Jesus writes this letter to the LUKEWARM

**Was he talking to Christians or not?**

**He said "lukewarm," his word**

**He didn't say lukewarm Christian, we added that phrase.**

So, were the lukewarm followers of Jesus or not?

You tell me.

Look at what he calls them:

***Wretched . . . Miserable . . . poor . . . blind***

Those have got to be believers, right?

Because don't we sing that hymn?

***Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me***

***I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I'm blind.***

Oh, wait, that's not the way it goes.

Jesus wrote these words to that church and Laodicea, knowing that we'd be reading them 2,000 years later and knowing that we would want to know . . .

If this Lukewarm Indifference wasn't just a problem that was unique to the first century but would still be something that people would struggle with centuries later, then . . .

If I've got some lukewarm indicators in my life, what steps can I take to turn up the heat?

**How Do I Reignite The Spiritual Fire?**

Two steps that come from our passage. . .

**1. Say I'M SORRY and turn from my lukewarm INDIFFERENCE**

We never outgrow our need to say "I'm sorry"

The Bible describes a spiritual step that is more powerful than just an apology

The Bible calls us to **REPENTANCE** which is not a word we use a lot

**REPENTANCE** means ***"I'm sorry and I'm going to turn in the other direction and go a new way."***

I'm not just saying, "Sorry, my bad!"

It's saying, "I am going to turn away from Lukewarm indifference."

Here again are the words of Jesus to this Lukewarm church . . .

***"I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference."***

**Revelation 3:19**

Jesus says, ***"This is a word of discipline to you, but I share it with those that I love"***

Jesus is saying ***"Turn from your indifference . . . walk away from it and walk toward me."***

And then a step that goes with it. . .

**2. Respond to the INVITATION of Jesus**

Listen to his words. . .

***"Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends."*** Revelation 3:20

A famous painting of this verse is William Holman Hunt's . . .

**The Light Of The World**

Maybe you've seen it.

Jesus standing and knocking on the door knocking.

There is a lot of symbolism in the painting

Weeds have grown up around the door, and the weeds symbolize sin, and they stop the door from being opened, in the same way that sin often distracts people from following Christ.

The hinges are rusted because the door has been closed for a long time.

One other detail is that there is no doorknob on the outside.

The door can only be opened from the inside.

The door is a picture of your heart.

Jesus doesn't force his way in.

He says ***"If you hear my voice and open the door to me, then I'll come in . . ."***

The verse is an invitation . . .

It's Jesus at the door, knocking . . .

Inviting you to open up your heart and let him in.

To do that you've got to recognize that He is on the outside, until you open that door and let him

in.

You don't have to get cleaned up first.

You don't have to make your life right first.

Jesus will take you right as you are, but he doesn't leave you there.

He transforms you

Suddenly your sins are forgiven and you are no longer the same.

You become a new creation in Christ.

All the old is gone and everything becomes new.

Jesus is knocking, he's knocking, he's knocking and he simply wants to come in.

If you hear his voice and open up your life, Jesus will come in.

Some of you say, "Well I have done that, I know him, but I am comfortable, I am complacent. I'm Lukewarm" my love has grown cold, what do you do?

You just turn to him today.

And you ask him to change that and to set you on fire for him.

Wherever you're at in this. . .

God will meet you and if you'll allow Him, he will change you.

Let's pray . . .