

What Would Jesus Undo?

Spiritual Indifference

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Key Scripture:

Revelation 3:15 - 19 NLT "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."

Matthew 25:24-30 NLT "Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' 26 "But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, 27 why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' 28 "Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. 29 To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. 30 Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

John 2:15 -17 "Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. 17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever."

TALK IT OVER

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- You're about to pass a homeless guy on the street and he has a sign in his hand that says he's hungry. Put yourselves on the shoes of the following famous people and discuss your responses as a group. And have some fun with it. What would Tom Brady do? What would Beyonce do? What would Jason Bourne do? What would Donald Trump do? What would Joe Biden do? What would Jesus do? What would you do?
- Now reverse the question, What would Jesus undo? Specifically, what would Jesus undo in your life?

Start **thinking**. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- *Read Revelation 3:15-19*. What was the problem in the Laodicean Church? Have you ever been a lukewarm Christian? Lukewarm seems better than cold. Why would Jesus prefer us to be hot or cold?
- Read the parable of the 3 servants in *Matthew 25:24-30*. Discuss the 3rd servant's reasoning behind his decision and his master's reaction. How did the servant's opinion of the master affect his management of the money?
- The servant didn't lose any of the money. Does the master's reaction seem over the top? What does this parable teach us about the use of the master's resources?
- Which cause of indifference do you most easily identify with—the illusion of self-sufficiency, the distractions of this world or the sin/love of the world?
- *Read 1 John 2:15-17*. Is it possible to be passionate about eternal life and worldly things at the same time? Why or why not?

Start **sharing**. Choose a question to create openness.

- Discuss the statement, "Do something that requires faith." Have you done something this week that requires faith? How does living in faith drive our spiritual passion?
- What step of faith is God calling you to make?

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- What is something you can do tomorrow that will require faith?
- What will you do every day this week to destroy spiritual indifference in your life?

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- God, after what You've done for us, we have no reason to live with spiritual indifference in our lives. Jesus, will You show us what You want to undo in our lives? Holy Spirit, please give us the strength to wake up every day in full reliance on You. Amen!!

Start **digging**. For further study.

- Read the 2nd page and discuss it.

Question: "How can I overcome spiritual apathy?"

Answer: Spiritual apathy, coldness, or indifference can affect even the most sincere Christian at one time or another. Human emotions being as fickle as they are, feelings of apathy or disinterest can sometimes replace the fervor we once felt for the things of God. Overcoming such apathy is necessary for continuing our walk with God.

The one who realizes he is spiritually apathetic needs to, first of all, make sure he is a true believer in Jesus Christ (see 1 John 5:13; Romans 8:16). If he knows that he is a true believer in Christ, he needs to then ask himself this question: "What caused me to lose my love and passion for the Lord?"

One cause of spiritual apathy is sin in the believer's life. When David sinned, he felt separated from God (Psalm 51:11). As he confessed his sin to God, David prayed for God to "renew a steadfast spirit" within him (verse 10), and he had this request: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me" (verse 12). A believer who feels spiritually apathetic should confess any known sin and ask for God's cleansing and renewal.

Another cause of spiritual apathy is allowing dead orthodoxy to replace a true love for the Lord. A Christian is to be marked by his love for and obedience to Jesus (John 14:21), but it is possible to obey without love. It is possible to cling to the truth and serve God yet do so in a loveless, lifeless fashion. Such mechanical service is not pleasing to God. This was the Lord's condemnation of the Ephesian church in Revelation 2:4: "You have forsaken the love you had at first." When Paul wrote to the same church around AD 60, he commended them for their love (Ephesians 1:15–16), but now, some thirty years later, they had left their first love. Their passion had waned. Why? Perhaps the Ephesians had begun to take for granted what they had in Christ. Living for Christ was no longer a daily adventure; it was becoming "boring," and they were losing sight of their eternal purpose. The church at Ephesus knew the teachings of Christ, but they were not living in His power. In so doing they lost their vibrant love and passion for Christ.

What's the solution, then, for turning spiritual apathy into a renewed love and passion for Jesus Christ? The word to the spiritually apathetic Ephesian church was, "Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first" (Revelation 2:4). The spiritually apathetic person needs to remember, repent, and renew.

First, the spiritually apathetic person needs to remember; that is, he should think back to the time when he sensed the warmth and closeness of Christ's presence. He should realize that he can return to that state of fellowship. Then he needs to repent; that is, he needs to see his spiritual apathy as sin and confess that sin to God (1 John 1:9). Finally, he needs to renew; that is, he must cultivate a renewed commitment to the Lord—not just serving the Lord, but knowing Him, praising Him, and fellowshiping with Him. He should start again, if he has discontinued it, daily Bible reading and prayer. He should let the indwelling Holy Spirit empower him so his life will display the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23). And he should fellowship with a Bible-believing local church (Hebrews 10:25).

Satan loves apathy. We must stay alert to the temptations of the old nature, the world, and the evil one. We must never lose the sense that God is always with us and in us. "We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). As we begin to worship and praise the Lord and let Christ control our lives each day, we will rediscover a life of adventure filled with joy and eternal purpose. We will wonder how we ever became spiritually apathetic in the first place.