

# Half of My Heart

Things are not always what they seem. Have you ever been so certain of something only to find out that your assumptions were completely wrong? I bet this happens more often than we'd like to admit! We are often quick to assume and make judgments about ourselves and others based on the current circumstances. **BUT often, first appearances are deceiving.**

Especially in our culture that is obsessed with appearance. We go to great lengths to make sure **we appear** to have life all figured out. But under that outer shell of perfection, things aren't so perfect.

This obsession with appearance is magnified on social media, where people have the power to hand-select what their appearance looks like to others, twisting the truth. People only show the parts of their life they want you to see, tell the stories that reflect them in a good light, dress in a way that portrays them in a certain manner. It's possible to create a whole other life on social media, where we can escape our real problems and get lost in the "perfect" life we've built online. We start to believe the altered image we've built is actually our real life! We feel justified to ignore actual struggles in life because of how many likes our post got.

Truth is friend, Instagram posts and TikTok videos don't always tell the truth about you and about others. But there is one object that doesn't have the ability to lie about your physical appearance. What is it? A mirror! Mirrors don't lie!

For as long as she could remember the Evil Queen would daily ask her mirror, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?" "Thou, O Queen, are the fairest in the land," said the mirror... until one day, Snow White shows up to town. "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?" Mirrors can't lie, so it says, "Snow White, O Queen, is the fairest of them all." Which then began the queens murderous plots...

You would think the mirror would've told the queen what she wanted to hear, I mean come on... she's the QUEEN, but mirrors don't lie. When has your bathroom mirror ever lied to you about the way your face looks? Never! A mirror is only capable of reflecting what is actually true. What is physically there. Now you may stand in front of a mirror and lie to yourself about what you truly see, but you're doing the deceiving not the mirror! A physical mirror can only reflect physical realities.

A basic mirror can't show what's truly going on spiritually. But there is a greater type of mirror **that can** reflect the truth on spiritual realities, a mirror more alive than the Queen's magic mirror, a mirror that has a face and wants to speak to you... it is the Mirror of the Word of God! In James 1, James likens the Word of God to a mirror. Stand in front of the Mirror of the Word, and you'll see the truth behind your actions... your motives, your desires, and your inward condition are all brought to light. Truth is revealed!

And here's the problem we need to talk about this morning: **Many people today have a false perspective on their own spiritual condition!** Many self-proclaimed Christians have a false perspective on their own spiritual condition! With this many people here in this room, there is probably someone here who has a false perspective on their spiritual condition.

We can put on a spiritual appearance before others. We say the right Christian things, look the part around other Christians, go to church, talk about Jesus to other Jesus people when we have too, we learn what it takes to **appear** like we're walking with Jesus! We create a "spiritual profile", where we portray to our church, friends, family only the positive things we want them to see, tell the stories that reflect us in a good light... We manufacture an image of the perfect ideal Christian life. And that's all it is, an IMAGE!

We start to believe that this spiritual image we've built up on the surface is actually real and of value before God! And we become self-deceived and comfortable with the status quo., We feel like we don't have to deal with what's actually going on in our life under the surface... The sinful lifestyle I don't want to let go of...

So what do we need to do... because there is much more at stake than getting validation from how many likes/views your video post gets... eternity, forever hinges on your real response to THE TRUTH, Jesus Christ. We don't want to be found wrong in our assumptions and it be too late...

This is why God is challenging you and me to take a hard look into the mirror of God's Word this morning and honestly examine our own spiritual condition. In our text, Jesus is writing to the church of Laodicea, who also needed to stand before the Word of God and allow it to cut through the false appearances they had built up...

It's been said that the of all the seven churches here in Revelation that Jesus wrote too, the church of Laodicea is the most representative of the modern church today. Jesus breaks down His letter to the Laodiceans in 3 sections that we will follow. First (1), Jesus explains their spiritual condition. Second (2), He tells them what caused this condition. Third, (3) Jesus gives them the solution, the way to get right with God and turn from their current state. There is going to be some tough words here for each of us that is willing to listen, but it is given to us and to the Laodiceans out of God's great love!

This letter was written not only for the Laodiceans but according to verse 22 "He who has an ear, **should** hear what the Spirit says to the churches." So let's do this, If you have ears raise your hand... ahh so this written to each of us too!

So, join me, verse 14... ["And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:](#)

The city of Laodicea was found in a valley between two other major cities, Colosse and Hierapolis. The city quickly grew because of its ideal position on trade routes and the banking centers . This also meant the city had grown incredibly rich! Laodicea became known as the "city that has need of nothing". They were a self-reliant people.

This was seen clearly in 60AD when a major earthquake levels the city and other cities surrounding the area. In response, Rome offered federal aid but the people of Laodicea said uh thanks but no thanks, and chose to rebuild the city using their own financial resources! They had no need for any handouts, and I suspect they took pride in that fact too!

And they were known throughout their world for their two primary exports. Laodiceans had some famous sheep, who were softer than your average sheep, sporting a glossy pure dark black/blue wool. They were fancy sheep, and many fancy garments and linens were produced there. They also had a medical school in the city, which created an eye salve thought to have healing benefits for weary, deteriorating eyes.

But the city did have one glaring problem it was also famous for... water supply issues. There were not enough springs and streams within the city to support itself so they had to have water piped in via aqueducts from the nearby cities, Colosse and Hierapolis. Hierapolis was known for its' hot springs. Boiling hot water shooting right out of the ground was piped over to Laodicea, but by the time it traveled the 6 miles of aqueducts, the water cooled down to an unpleasant lukewarm temperature.

Colosse was known for its' crisp, ice cold springs, providing perfectly clean water. BUT after the 11 mile journey, the water arriving in Laodicea had warmed up to a tepid, stagnant lukewarm temperature. So if you were traveling to Laodicea, you knew lukewarm water was on the menu!

Which let's be honest, that doesn't sound very appealing! Who here likes coffee? More like who here doesn't like coffee! Have you ever had a cup of coffee with friends and after sitting and chatting for some, your once hot drink has become this slightly warm cup of MEH... the change in temperature seems to make it taste different, and your tepid coffee leaves a weird film in your mouth now... I mean nobody goes to Starbucks and orders a slightly warm Pumpkin Spice Latte. You're just a little weird if you do!

Laodicea was known for its lukewarm water supply. And the church of Laodicea was most likely founded there by Paul, who mentions Laodicea 4 times in his letter to the Colossians. And while the church may have started well, there was a spiritual decline occurring there. Jesus, having much to say introduces Himself, as the Amen, Faithful and True, the Beginning of creation...

Amen, isn't just the exclamation point at the end of your prayer, its not something you yell when you like whatever is happening (Preach, Amen Sister!) It means "so be it" or "it is done", also meaning "truth or verity". Jesus is saying up front I am the truth, the so be it, I am unchanging. Which contrasts the changes occurring in the church of Laodicea described in verse 15...

Jesus says of the believers there, 15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Standing face-to-face with the Mirror of the Word, the **spiritual condition** of the Laodiceans is revealed: like the waters they drank daily, the Laodiceans were **spiritually lukewarm**. To be spiritually lukewarm means you’re in the middle! You don’t have a frozen cold heart of unbelief, and you also don’t have a committed hot heart on fire for God. Lukewarmness is a position of compromise and indifference... it is the zone where a Christian attempts to live halfway in the world, and halfway for Jesus.

The lukewarm Laodiceans were caught straddling the fence, and though there is an outward appearance of religion, under the surface nothing is happening! They are empty. Going through the motions, they exemplify what many call today Cultural Christianity. This is when a person claims to be a Christian just because they go to church once or twice a week. Being a Christian is only an occasional activity they take part in, rather than committing their life to Jesus.

Like the highly filtered instagram page of the girl who’s hiding behind an online IMAGE she’s curated, the lukewarm Christian wears the profile picture of a Christian, but under the surface there’s not much there.

In the middle, the person thinks they have enough of Jesus to where they don’t really feel they need to seek Him any further. It is hard for this person to recognize they even need Jesus, because they are comfortably warm in both the world and God. And it is very hard to reach a person who is indifferent.

We certainly know this in the Bible Belt here in the South. Saying you are a Christian is popular in our area. In fact most people consider themselves Christian, they attend church, and hear the name Jesus regularly. Many want to claim all of the benefits and eternal security of being a Christian all the while living like they don’t need Jesus at all and show no interest to seek Him!

Jesus even says he’d even rather the the church be “cold” unbelievers than be lukewarm professing Christians! WHAT? At least unbelievers live like unbelievers and they’re good at it! ...And at least the cold person would be able to recognize their need for Jesus. There’s something missing in their life and they tangibly feel it! Jesus is saying, “the cold will actually hear me out!”

You see lukewarmness blurs the lines! It mocks God and what He has done for us. A lukewarm walk, says “ I don’t really need THAT MUCH of you Jesus... I have enough already... Let me be...” We sang the classic worship song this morning “I Give You My Heart”, and man what a great song! But what if we changed the lyrics to represent a lukewarm heart towards God. It would sound something like this:

This is part of my desire  
To honor You  
Lord, with half my heart  
I worship You  
With Some of what’s within me  
I give You praise  
some of that I adore  
Is in You

Lord, I give You half of my heart  
I give You half of my soul  
I don’t really live for you alone  
And some breaths that I take  
Some moments I'm awake  
You can have Your way in me

Imagine how that would sound to God...

And it’s because of this indifferent/lax/who cares attitude that I believe Christians are often stereotyped as hypocrites! Often times it’s valid!

“OH those Christians... they say they’re different and have Jesus, but they’re not living any different than me, all they’re doing is talking about Jesus, but not living for Him. Why would I want to follow Jesus, if His own people already really don’t care enough to live differently for Him. Christianity must not be something to take seriously...

It is disheartening to consider how many people have rejected Jesus because of the lukewarm lives of those who say they trust Him. In fact, Jesus says all of this makes Him sick, and [because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth](#). Jesus is not cool with straddling the fence bro! You can’t serve two masters, lead two different lives!

He doesn’t say lukewarmness caused Him to spittle/spit, or just say EWWWWW, but it causes Him to puke. To Upchuck, projectile vomit, hurl... It’s important you get this word picture here... To vomit is a violent expulsion of an irritant in your stomach that needs to quickly be cleansed out before it harms the body further. Jesus is saying this spiritual indifference, this half-heartedness is sickening.

How can you take the greatest treasures of heaven and eternity and just put them on the back burner and turn down the heat... The purpose of My coming was to see men/women saved, but you guys in Laodicea are down here just playing church mocking what I’ve done... and it makes me sick...

The Laodiceans were comfortable in their lukewarm spiritual condition. But how did they get there? Verse 17, we find what caused their condition... it reads, [17 Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked](#)

In verse 17, we find the cause for the lukewarmness of the Laodiceans (and in us) to be threefold: The church was 1) self-deceived, 2) self-obsessed, and 3) compromised.

The first factor causing lukewarmness is self-deception. The mirror of God’s Word had a much different assessment of the people than what they actually thought of themselves. Compare the two: the people project that they are rich, wealthy, and need nothing, BUT Jesus says not so fast you’re making me sick to my stomach, you’re so lifted high in your pride you think you’re doing great but you’re actually deeply deceived, wretched, poor, miserable, blind, naked-shameful.

Friend, the more we try to APPEAR like we need nothing, that everything is perfect in our lives, the more we deceive ourselves and slip further into half-heartedness because we start to believe our own lies about ourselves as true. When really, deep down we’re miserable.

The second factor causing lukewarmness is self-obsession. And man these Laodicean believers were obsessed with themselves! There is so much emphasis Jesus puts on the fact that they say “I” am rich , “I” am wealthy, “I” need nothing. A sure way to become lukewarm is to become self-absorbed! Selfishness is nurtured in our culture and this has been slipping into the church as well! This idea that we need to have more time spent focusing on ourselves is being introduced into the modern church, as if we’re not already consumed with ourselves enough! Jesus said the exact opposite in Matthew 16:24 - If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. I don’t know about you, but man I have a lot of selfishness that needs to die, not be nurtured!

The third factor causing lukewarmness is compromise... Instead of holding fast to the first spiritual truths they once knew, the Laodiceans lowered their standards, got focused on the wrong things, and stopped listening to the right things! They became materialistic, taking great pride in their wealth and riches, and ability to have need of nothing.

And as they become so wrapped up in the materialism, it is clear they were ignoring the Bible! Jesus says “YOU SAY” one thing but if you were really spending time with Me in the Word you would know that you really are something different! And when we neglect the Bible and the work of the holy spirit in our personal lives, we start getting colder and colder towards God, and end up being comfortable in the middle.

They were spiritually blind... and if you are blind, you can’t see that you are miserable, poor, naked... Theologian John Walvoord said it well, “The Laodiceans are typical of the modern world, which revels in that which the natural eye can see but is untouched by the gospel and does not see beyond the veil of the material to the unseen and real eternal spiritual riches.”

But Jesus offers them the solution in verse 18, —I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

What is the solution to overcoming lukewarm, half-heartedness? Come back to me, be zealous, and repent! Jesus is saying listen I can help you! You need to look to me! Stop looking at yourself! Do you want true spiritual riches? Come get them from me and I will give them to you! I want to give you this white garment to replace your glossy black one from the world. Receive the pure, righteous covering from Me to cover the shame of your nakedness and former guilt.

And look I know you send your fancy eye cream all over the world but I don't care you are spiritually blind! You need to come to Me and have your spiritual vision restored, see the world and yourself, and Me from the heavenly perspective! Come back to Me and be heated up, be zealous, committed to God! ...The problem is Christian, you've been looking for the world to satisfy all of these needs you have, and it hasn't worked and it never will... Jesus can satisfy every need!

I want the world to make me feel important, worthy, beautiful, so we look for validation in all the wrong places, and Jesus is saying come to ME for that, and I'll do it my way... Let me be your supplier for everything, and your faith can be like gold tried in the fire!

The purpose of my life and your life friend is to be in fellowship, in relationship with God. He created us for this! Because of this you will never find satisfaction anywhere else!

So He cries out passionately here for you and I to turn away from our sin, repent, and come back! And in verse 19, wow did you catch it, he drops a bombshell statement here! You know we look at this letter to the Laodicea and we automatically think the most amazing line of the letter is "I will vomit you out of my mouth", but friend that is just not true! Here's the most mind blowing words yet, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten."

Because lets be honest here brothers and sisters, this has been a tough section of scripture to let pour over us! and bring to light problems in our lives... Because I think there's more Laodicean in each of us than we'd like to admit... this is tough. Many Bible scholars agree that outside of Jesus rebuke to the scribes and pharisees in Matthew 23, this letter to the church of Laodicea is the most scathing, heated, challenge Jesus makes in Scripture... And it is issued to the CHURCH to believers, you and me!

I can see it on some of your faces, you're thinking "goodness Andrew, chilllll I get it man... I thought I was okay but I'm not!" When will this rebuke end! Verse 19 though... I love you who, I rebuke and chasten. God's chastening/correcting is done because He loves you and has a better life for you in Him on the other side of the correcting!

Look you may be the most lukewarmiest lukewarm Christian here this morning, and here's Jesus' message to you, "I love you, come back to Me, I want to help you get this right..." Is He mad at you? Angry? Well He does want you to get this right with Him today, so with tears running down His face, He says look I'm chastening you because I love you!

Anyone think God hates you because you're lukewarm? NO! In fact God knows you better than you know yourself, He knows that you're actually worse off than you think! And He still loves you! Oh well sure Andrew...God has to love me, He's God! The word for love here is not agape, but phileo. Listen to how sweet this is... It's as if Jesus is saying, "yeah you know I love you, you know that... But Andrew... I still like you... Even though I have to rebuke you and chasten you, I am still your friend! I love you deeply as My friend. WOW... I don't deserve that..."

Lord forgive me for cheapening your love with my lukewarmness...

He loves you this way Lukewarm Christian, He loves you this way unbeliever, He loves you this way Self-Deceived Christian... He loves you.



You know I have always personally related to the Laodiceans so much over the years because much of my young life was spent in lukewarmness. Half-heartedness towards God. I grew up within these 4 walls, had Kindergarten with Mrs. Ann down the hall over there, I learned how to grow up under my youth pastor, Zach and other men in the church.

I was the epitome of the church kid! I wanted to know all there was to know, come to church and be the guy who had all the answers in small groups, I strived to build up this perfect image that I had everything figured out and that I was a committed follower of Jesus. But all it was for the longest time was... an image. An empty shell of religion.

And I was comfortably lukewarm, in a half hearted relationship to God. I didn't want to give up my sinful pleasures and addictions, but I knew that Jesus was real and that I needed Him so I deceived myself into camping somewhere in the middle. Which was miserable. I had only given Jesus half of my heart.

Until I listened, looked into the Mirror of the Word and finally saw the truth. I asked Him to remove my spiritual blindness, and I turned away, repented, and fully surrendered my life to Him! Things haven't been the same since! What I realized was that through all of the indifference I had towards Jesus, He never stopped pursuing me, He was waiting for me to make a choice to repent and surrender.

And this is exactly where we're at in verse 20... [20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. "](#)

So we've walked through the chastening, rebuking, Jesus saying look Laodiceans, I love you! You're My friend! Please come back to Me and repent! After all of that, where do we find Jesus standing? BEHOLD, outside of a door knocking for entry into the heart man/woman. Outside of the door knocking for entry to His own church.

I mean why does Jesus knock? He could easily bust through the door, and come force His way in! Why doesn't He? Well He's given us a choice. A free will. Jesus comes to the doors, and asks for us to respond. "I'm gonna knock! I'm gonna pursue you all the way up to doormat of your heart. And I'll knock and you need to respond. Open the door. Repent of your pride, stop obsessing over yourself, surrender fully to Me. We need to hear His voice, and when we truly pay attention to what He is trying to say, we can open the door and let Him in!

I love this here, He says, ["If anyone hears My voice"](#) which anyone means everyone! He's going to knock at the door of every man and woman's heart! And if anyone opens the door, He will "stand in the doorway and just say Hi, exchange pleasantries and leave... NO! Jesus doesn't just stop and say "OH Hey!!! How's the family? Oh I heard little Johnnie went to the doctor how is he doing? How was Carol's dance recital? OKAY great! IT was awesome to see you today, have a great day BYE NOW!"

He says he will come in and dine with you, break bread, spend time with you, stay with you, and fellowship...It's not a courtesy visit... He wants to stay forever... to dine in the original language meant more than just eating a drive thru meal together, but a long face-to-face meal, being nourished in each others presence.

Too often all we claim we have time for with God is a drive thru meal, so we get our Bible verse of the day on our phone, have a little Bible snack, and say yeah that was enough... But no its not! Thats not nourishing, you're not getting to know Him, no bread was broken together! Sunday mornings aren't enough either, being a Christian is not just an occasional activity once a week!

We need to be coming daily to the Word of God to truly fellowship with God! Thats where we grow, the more time I spend with Him in His Word the more He rubs off on me and changes my desires, my attitudes, and I start to live with a heavenly perspective! EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED!

He promises to do this if we just open the door and dine with Him! WOW! He promises in verse 21 to the overcomer of indifference, compromise, spiritual blindness, that this person will get to sit with Jesus on His throne! What a glorious promise! Won't you just open the door? ["He who has an ear, let him hear what the](#)

**Spirit says to the churches.** I don't know about you , but I need to hear that message every once in a while, I don't want to get comfortable or start going through the motions...

The mirror of God's Word doesn't lie about our spiritual condition... We may be able to hide it from others but not in front of Him. And He chastens out of love and offer the solution to our problem to come back to Him, repent, and restore fellowship together today.

So maybe you're here today and you're lukewarm, there's areas of your life you're going through the motions in...

You're here and you've been running away from the Lord, but He's taken His position outside the door of your heart. You may try to run but you can get away from this...

You're here today and you've never come to Christ before, He said He wrote this to all who can hear, are you hearing Him appealing to you to come to Him? Hear Him knocking at your door. Because if you don't come to Jesus, one day you're going to hear this... and the Savior will have turned away, because He presented every opportunity and you refused.

If you've never made that decision to give your life to Christ, you need to make that decision today! What are you waiting for? You can place your hope in Him today!

I'd like to lead us all in a prayer using the lyrics of I Give You My Heart. If you want to say Lord I surrender again for I've been lukewarm or say for the first time you want to accept Him and give your life to Him, then repeat the prayer with me.

After the service as well there will be prayer counselors who would be happy to lead you in a prayer as well or pray for other needs, and I'll be down front as well.

Let's pray...

FORGIVE ME

This is my desire  
To honor You  
Lord, with all my heart  
I worship You  
All I have within me  
I give You praise  
All that I adore  
Is in You

Lord, I give You my heart  
I give You my soul  
I live for you alone  
And every breath that I take  
Every moment I'm awake  
Lord, have Your way in me