

## The Atheist's "Good" Heart

We mustn't be shocked by the title of this blog post. I'm calling the atheist's heart good just for a certain reason and a disposition their heart is having. Even though it might sound awkward, because we know that obviously, no person's heart is good by itself, including the one of a believer.

Sometimes, the heart of these persons might have a better disposition even than some other persons that we might think are good or are walking with the Lord. Do you know that God loves atheists, and He would love to work in their hearts? He gave His life for them. Let us see some passages in the book of Revelations.

<sup>14</sup> "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: <sup>15</sup> **"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.** <sup>17</sup> 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— <sup>18</sup> 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. (**Revelation 3:14-18**, emphasis added)

Many times when we read **Revelation 3:15-16** talking about a lukewarm person, we think that it has to do with people standing halfway with God and halfway with the world (and in part might be right), but who can be saved then? Because this is usually a struggle we find quite often, even amongst us believers

sometimes, talking about decisions that we go through or situations we face daily. Of course, we know that God can give us everything needed to face and overcome these moments, but coming back to the verse and seeing the harsh way God is expressing Himself against being lukewarm makes me think about it. What else can it mean?

Reading the whole passage (something that most of the time we need to do), we see verse 3:17 saying: “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....”

So here we see that this part of the scripture keeps speaking about the same person that was called lukewarm in the previous verse. Therefore, we conclude that the one being lukewarm is actually the one who thinks he has something from God and is already saying: “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing.” And this definitely is not liked by God, especially when that person doesn’t realize he is poor and blind and in need. But how could he, after having an opinion for himself that he is already fine? That’s the danger of it. And that’s why it is so difficult for God to work there.

This is where it comes in, the first of the beatitudes spoken on the mountain: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

And not by chance Jesus began with this beatitude His speech. Obviously, this beatitude speaks about people acknowledging their need for God. This explains why Jesus’ attitude toward the scribes and Pharisees was so harsh. Those were the religious people from that era. The ones thinking that are already fine and don’t need a Savior. You can see the conversation He was having with them in Matthew 23. Not seeing any other way to reach them, He addressed them in a quite hard manner so that, in some way, He could let them think of their condition. Talking about scribes and Pharisees, the Bible doesn’t address just the people living in that era but the attitude people could have today. The words from the Bible don’t just address people living at that timeline of history. God’s word is alive, and it addresses the attitudes and the situations people have today. Having the same kind of attitude as the Pharisees can also turn us into religious persons. And sometimes it is so hard to reach out to this kind of people. Even for God.

Yes, it might sound strange that God cannot reach someone, but it is true. It is hard to explain to people who think they are fine that they need God. Especially those who think they are fine with God and even please Him. You could tell them that they need some kind of correction, and they could accept it, but to tell them that they need to repent and start knowing God from the beginning and anew is hard. These are the ones who think they are already rich and need nothing, as **Revelation 3:17** talks about. That's why v. 16 says: "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." God cannot accept this kind of attitude because while they have it, they cannot repent and acknowledge their spiritual need. That's why He speaks harshly to those persons. Because He loves them and doesn't want them to remain in that condition. If God talks in a harsh way to us, it is for our good. All of us need to be aware not to have this kind of attitude. Jesus wished for the church of the Laodiceans, which also could represent us personally, to be hot or cold at least. Someone is hot because he is warmed by God's presence. This is to be hot for God. His fire is burning in that person's heart. A person could also be cold. This is the one who clearly knows of not having anything from God and the one who openly doesn't believe. In this way, it will be easier for him to acknowledge that he doesn't have anything and could say: "God, set your fire in me; I need you; warm me, please!" That's why Jesus says there at the end of v. 15: "I could wish you were cold or hot." Because God can work in the cold person's heart when he is aware of his condition.

That's why I mentioned the atheists at the beginning of this blog. Because even being skeptical, they don't feel spiritually rich for Jesus or religious. They openly say that they don't support this belief. If some of them get convinced of their spiritual condition, they will most likely sincerely repent.

What about the person who thinks he is already warm? There is not much hope for him. He thinks he is already warm and rich in God (**Revelation 3:17**). He won't look for a solution to his problem as he doesn't think he has one unless something happens to clearly show him his condition and make him think about it. Do you remember Jesus's conversations with the religious leaders at that time, like the Pharisees, the scribes, and the Sadducees? He was often harsh with them and many times called them hypocrites. We can see He wasn't so happy with them.

So, we can see that He is more upset with someone who is religious in the wrong way than with those who don't believe and with the common sinners. He was even called a "friend of sinners." It was for the compassion He was showing them. He always approached them as people who needed to be given an opportunity. This doesn't mean that He wasn't showing them or talking with them about their sin. He just believed they could change by accepting His love. A difference to us, for example, who often tolerate people because it looks like they agree with us and appear religious. We would rather prefer them than sinners and nonbelievers like atheists, for example. Also, it is because people who don't believe, don't identify, or don't agree with us. At the same time, Jesus was compassionate with those people. I am not saying we need to engage or accept what they do or the way they think, but to be compassionate with them. Obviously, they will also perish if they don't repent, if they don't accept His message, and I'm not saying we won't find difficulties with them, but I personally had profound conversations with atheists about creation, accepting Jesus, or faith. It is often hard going deep into these topics with someone who might think he is well, especially if he thinks he is already spiritually rich.

God loves working in the lost person's heart. He came for those people. This doesn't mean the other persons are not this way. They just can't see and acknowledge it.

When talking of an atheist, we talk of a person who doesn't believe in God and Christianity. They reject the idea there is a God. They could be referred to as "cold" persons, as Revelation 3 talks about, even though in this group, are also included the believers who are not living a warm relationship with God and acknowledge their condition. What an atheist needs is a miracle from God so that he can acknowledge his condition and draw close to God.

Why do we talk about Christianity when we talk about the faith in God? Because Christianity is one of the few religions that emphasize forgiveness. It says that we need God's forgiveness. It is because we have a debt with God that we cannot pay. Everyone has it. Only He can condone and forgive that debt. He died and paid for us on the cross to give us an opportunity. This is what's really going on. With all due respect we can say that many other people or religions are promoting what man can do for his salvation. It is about how many works or

charitable deeds he can do to please God. Works by themselves, even being good, cannot save us. That's why we need God to save us. That's why Christians call Him Savior. Good works are done also by Christians, of course, but only after being saved, to show the love of God to others. That's why, as well, a believer is called a Christian. It is because his life is founded on Christ and His work on the cross. The work through which this person is saved.

We often think and have the concept that the good guys are those who are quickly disposed to listen to the gospel or follow it, while Jesus Himself said that He came for those who are sick; He came for the sinners. And the Bible tells us that the seeds fallen on rocky places are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away ([Luke 8:13](#)). It is a deeper soil that we are looking for. This blog post's title is "The atheist's good heart. It is because if they begin believing in God, it will be easier for them to acknowledge their need. Their heart could be a good soil for God once He starts working in it. This is because they never thought to be religious or to know God. This makes it easier for them to acknowledge their need for God. The question is to start believing, and this in itself is a miracle. An act from God is needed there. We all need to be open and look for it. No ground (heart) is good in itself, but some heart's ground has a predisposed soil to work on because of their spiritual poverty ([Matthew 5:3](#)). This way, it could become the good ground [Luke 8:15](#) talks about.

And what it takes for an atheist to believe is a miracle because if such a person comes to believe one day, it will be for real. And it is a miracle we are looking for. "To believe" is a miracle. This is what faith is about.

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