

## **The Preferred Temperature of the Redeemed**

In the 1800's a Sunday School teacher named Edward Kimball became very burdened about the spiritual condition of an eighteen year old boy in his class. The youth had been in his class for almost a year. He was coming to Sunday School because of an agreement he had made with his uncle, who employed him in his shoe shop. The uncle had said, "Nephew, if you don't come to church and Sunday School with me, you don't have a job."

The uncle felt that going to church might keep the young man out of trouble. But after a year of going, the young man had no intention of committing his life to Christ until he had had his fun and was much older. As Edward Kimball prayed for the young man his heart grew increasingly concerned about this churchgoing but Christ-less young man.

We'll find out how that one turned out later! But first let me ask you a question:

### **What sins are the most repugnant in God's eyes?**

In the seven letters of Revelation two and three we saw that idolatry and sexual immorality upset Jesus enough that He threatens to come to the church personally and deal with those engaged in those sins.

But today we find a sin that upsets Jesus so much He feels like vomiting!  
What an awful picture!

I don't know about you, but whenever I'm around people that are throwing up, my own gag reflex makes me feel like throwing up. Vomiting is one of the worst things to picture in the Bible, that's stark language! That's the bad news!

But the good news in this passage is that even for the person engaged in this sin there is hope if they repent.

And as we will see, just a few verses after the awful mental picture of vomiting comes one of the most wonderful mental pictures in the Bible!

**Read Revelation 3:14-22      PRAY!**

### **Things we know about Laodicea:**

- It was 45 miles south of Philadelphia on the road to Colossae
- It was founded by Antiochus the II in the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC to honor his wife Laodice
- It had grown into a highly successful commercial and financial banking center
- It also produced fine clothing and carpets made from the black wool of sheep raised in the area
- It boasted theaters, a huge stadium, lavish public baths, and fabulous shopping centers
- In the temple of Asklepios in Laodicea there was famous medical school
- It was known for producing a "Phrygian powder" famous for its cure of eye defects

- It was also hit hard by the earthquake of AD 17 that had ruined Philadelphia
- But unlike Philadelphia, Laodicea rebuilt with their own money and no help from the empire
- One more thing about Laodicea- 7 miles north of it lay Hierapolis, famous for its “hot springs”
- A six mile long aqueduct brought the water into Laodicea
- As the water made its way down to Laodicea, it became lukewarm.
- Just 10 miles away, Colossae was known for its cold springs.

Now from the book of Colossians we know that the churches in Colossae and Laodicea and Hierapolis had a good sharing relationship. See Colossians 4:12-16.

**In his letter to the Colossians Paul described himself as struggling so that the Christians in those places would understand the treasure they had in Christ, never taking Him for granted! See Colossians 2:1-3**

It seems that Jesus has the same concern as this letter to the Laodiceans rounds out the seven letters of Revelation chapters two and three!

For a moment, picture the Bible as a fireworks show about Jesus!  
What comes at the end of a fireworks show? The Grand Finale!

**Jesus appears throughout the Bible, but when we get to Revelation, we have an amazing portrait painted of our Lord Jesus Christ!**

In the first three chapters of Genesis, a name for Jesus appears once in 80 verses.  
In the first three chapters of the Psalms, a name for Jesus occurs once in 26 verses.  
In the first three chapters of Romans, a name for Jesus occurs an average of one out of every 13 verses.  
In the first three chapters of Colossians, a name for Jesus occurs an average of one out of every 6 verses.  
In the first three chapters of John’s gospel, a name for Jesus occurs an average of one out of every 5 verses.

**Here in the first three chapters of Revelation, a name for Jesus occurs an average of one out of every 3 verses, with over 25 names of Jesus given!**

**V. 14 Jesus is our Faithful and True Creator!**

When you say ‘amen’ you are saying ‘it is true.’ Jesus is the truth! He is the Amen!

Here we are told that Jesus is the Originator of God’s creation!

When the Laodiceans read the letter to the Colossians they read this about Jesus:

**“By Him everything was created, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also the Head of the body, the church.” Col. 1:16-18a**

Do you know what Christ was reminding the church in Laodicea, and us?

We are only alive because of Jesus! He is our Creator, the source of our blessings! Everything we have is ultimately a gift from Him! Do not take Him for granted!

Let me ask you a question:

**Do you take 15-30 minutes a week to thank Jesus for creating this world?  
For creating you and being the source of everything that really matters in life?**

I hope you do, because next week when chapter four brings us to Heaven we will see that Heaven constantly exalts God for His creation of all things!

### **V. 15-17 The sin that make Jesus want to throw up: Lukewarmness**

Every once in a while I'll get to the coffee pot too late, and take a sip of the coffee I pour. And it is lukewarm, and I spit it out of my mouth.

Lukewarm is an annoyance in coffee drinking;  
But lukewarm in your relationship to Christ is a great insult to Jesus.

**"Lukewarmness is not weakness, it is wickedness. It is not a small sin; it is a great sin. If the greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, then the greatest sin is not to do so."** -Adrian Rogers

**"Lukewarmness is the greatest form of blasphemy."** -G. Campbell Morgan

Note that the Lukewarmness that Jesus despises is contrasted with hot and cold.

### **A believer who is "hot" is on fire for Jesus!**

She loves Jesus and spends time in personal devotion.  
He can't wait for the next time to be around his Christian friends in Bible study.  
She considers it a high honor to give financially to advance Christ's great commission.  
He would rather die than compromise his testimony.  
She sings with a heart full of gratitude and praise.  
He thinks nothing of stopping what he is doing to meet a pressing need.  
She loves to share her testimony.  
He hopes for an open door to share the gospel with others.  
Their hearts well up with gratitude for all Jesus has done as Creator and Redeemer!

John Stam and his wife Betty were missionaries in China who were martyred in 1934 when they were 27 and 28 years old. Their tragic deaths motivated many young people to go into missionary service. John once said,

“Take away everything I have, but do not take away the sweetness of walking and talking with the King of glory.”  
-John Stam

That’s a believer who is “hot” for Jesus! Oh, but there’s also those who are cold.

### **A person who is cold is dead spiritually.**

They are not a Christian at all, and don’t pretend to be!  
They would never acknowledge Christ as the source of blessing, because they don’t think He is. They believe they can get by in life quite well without Him.

Their only good quality is that they are honest enough to say squarely:  
“I don’t really believe in Jesus.” Many of those same people would say, “I believe most churchgoers are hypocrites anyway.”

If that’s you this morning, let me show you something in verse 15.  
Jesus actually prefers your response to that of those who are lukewarm.

Now unfortunately for you, Mr. Coldheart, if you don’t repent, you’ll still go to Hell when you die. And here’s even worse news for you- you’ll probably be joined there by the majority of those who are lukewarm.

### **So who are the lukewarm?**

**The lukewarm are church goers but not Christ lovers.**

Turn to 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Read it.

Did you catch that? The lukewarm are religious, but they don’t love God.

### **Verse 17 shows us the big problem with the lukewarm: self-deception.**

The lukewarm churchgoer thinks they have it all together, and don’t understand their great need before God. They are self-righteous and self-sufficient, don’t think they really need God or others, and are full of pride as they judge others who are not good “Christians” like they are.

But according to Jesus’ assessment in v. 17, they are as lost as a white goose in a snow storm. Or as He says, their real spiritual condition is poor, blind, and naked!

They think they are God's gift to the churches they act like owners of, but Jesus says, "You make me want to vomit!"

### **V. 18-19     The antidote for Lukewarmness**

He tells these churchgoers that think they have it all together to "buy" some things from Him!

Jesus says to these church going but Christ-less people:

You are poor spiritually until I make you rich;  
 You are blind spiritually until you let me open your eyes;  
 You are naked before God until you let me clothe you.

It sounds like what he told religious Nicodemus, "you must be born again or you won't experience the Kingdom of God."

Isn't it interesting that lots of people in churches say, "I'm not comfortable with that language about being born again."

Of course their uncomfortable with that language: it's more Jesus than they can stand! They want a little religion, not a God who is an all consuming fire!

### **What's the antidote for being lukewarm?**

**Acknowledge your sinfulness and utter lack of righteousness before God.**

**Repent of having a faith that makes true dependence on Christ optional.**

**Seek God as a deer pants for water!**

**See Psalm 42:1**

"My hope as a desperate sinner who lives in a desert of unrighteousness hangs on this biblical truth: that God is the kind of God who will be pleased with the one thing I have to offer- my thirst...God is delighted not by the resourcefulness of bucket brigades, but by the bending down of broken sinners to drink at the fountain of grace."  
 -John Piper

Note the good news in verse 19.            Jesus still loves the lukewarm!

No doubt many true Christians were caught up in this spirit of Lukewarmness that pervaded the church in Laodicea. And so he says, "I'm only telling you these things because I love you, that's why I'm rebuking you. There's still time!"

### **V. 20            Jesus Christ's Great invitation!**

Robert Murray McCheyne called this the most touching passage in the Bible!

If you not a Christian here this morning, Christ's invitation is for you!  
Let Jesus into your life!

But also if you're a professing Christian here this morning, pierced by the thought of your own putrid Lukewarmness, Christ's invitation is for you!

**Here are the two enduring images I want to leave with you from chapters 1-3:**

- 1. The strong Christ of chapter 1, the Ancient of Days in all His splendor!**
- 2. That same awesome God coming to your "door" to meet with you!**

There are two times you are supposed to let him in:  
The day you are saved! And today as you spend time with him afresh!

And don't forget to apply this as a church, Wayne Hills Baptist! As we take communion today, invite Christ to make your faith and that of our church hot!

**"As a deer longs for streams of water, so I long for You, God. I thirst for God, the Living God!"**  
-Ps. 42:1-2

**As you seek Christ, don't forget the 3 main commands given to the churches:**

**Remember...** The good news of grace you received and heard!  
**Repent...** Do the things you did when your faith was new!  
**Listen...** To what the Spirit is saying to you!

I told you earlier about the burden a Sunday School teacher named Edward Kimball felt for a young man in his class who was church going but clearly lukewarm about Jesus. Kimball went to visit the young man in the shoe shop and found him at the back of the shop, wrapping up shoes and stacking them on the shelves. He challenged him about his relationship with the Lord.

As Kimball put it, "It seemed that the young man was just ready for the light that broke upon him, for there, at once, in the back of that shoe store in Boston, 18 year old D.L. Moody gave himself and his life to Christ."

-Jesus Driven Ministry, A. Fernando, 213-214

D.L. Moody went from being lukewarm about Christ to being red hot for Jesus, making an amazing impact not just in America but around the world!

Sinner's Prayer!