

When Jesus Knocks

Key Verses: Rev 3:15-16 ~ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.” - *Holman*

Power Point: We should not be lukewarm (half hearted, complacent, apathetic & indifferent) about our spiritual condition & relationship with Christ.

1. Rev 3:17a, Rev 2:8, 9, Luke 12:15 ~ The Church of Laodicea failed to recognize that material things are not a measure of spirituality.

- What are some of the things in your life that you thought were a measure of spirituality?
- How did they affect your walk with Christ?

2. Rev 3:20 ~ Jesus knocking at the door is a metaphor to His dealing with our heart.

- What are some symptoms when you are lukewarm?

3. Rev 3:17b ~ They didn't perceive or see the deterioration of their spiritual condition.

- Share an experience in your life where your spiritual condition deteriorated. How did it change?
- What steps did you take to rekindle your walk with the Lord?

Application: Are you lukewarm? In this New Year there will be many distractions. But make sure that you do not neglect the one of greatest significance. Make prayer & study of the Word a priority and keep your relationship with Christ up to date.

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Introduction: Many of you know how awkward it is to have an unexpected and many unwanted solicitor or salesperson knock on your door. It usually happens at the most inconvenient time. The challenge is how to delicately tell them that you are not interested in what they are offering with the hope that they are not some persistent and unrelenting person who has a quota to meet. Of course there is the other method of just letting them knock and pretending you aren't home or that you are too busy to get to the door.

It takes a lot of courage to knock at a door of a perfect stranger and give a sales pitch, especially in our culture. However what if that person who knocks at the door is a family member or someone of great significance? Would we be so busy as to let them knock and hope that they go away or would we gladly lay aside what we are doing and welcome them in and give our undivided attention?

2010 is upon us and life can get pretty busy with so many things that demand our attention and interest. We get busy making a living, working, studying, visiting, meeting with people and keeping ourselves healthy. In the process of trying to live our lives we can fail to entertain and give thought to the most significant people of our lives. This is what seems to have happened to the church of Laodicea.

Revelations 3:14-19

Jesus used imagery drawn from the daily life of the Laodiceans to bring out His point of their spiritual condition. In order to understand what he was saying to them and how it applies to us we have to do a little background. (3:14-22)

Background: Laodicea was in an important geographical position. It was often called the 'Metropolis', as it was the county seat for twenty-five other cities.

It was an exceedingly wealthy city, so much so, that, when it suffered a major earthquake in AD.62, it refused assistance from Rome and from its own riches and wealth rebuilt the city.

Laodicea was so rich a city they claimed they needed help neither from God or man.

Commercially the city was of much importance.

Banking Institutions

Rich banking institutions were located in the city of Laodicea. Plenty of business and trade was carried on in the city and from the surrounding cities.

The word of Jesus to the Church to buy of Him gold tried in the fire' takes on much significance in the light of the city's old banking institutions. (3:18)□

Clothing industries

Laodicea earned much of its wealth in the clothing industry in the production of wool. The city was especially well known for its longhaired black sheep from whom woolen over-coats were manufactured and exported to all parts of the then-known world.

Notice how Jesus exhorts them to buy white garments from him. (3:18)

School of Medicine

Laodicea was also known for its medical school, which invented an ointment for the treatment of ears and an eye.

The word of Christ to the Church to 'buy of Him eye-salve' takes on fuller meaning in the light of this healing ointment manufactured in the city (3:18)

Tepid Water

The major weakness of Laodicea was its lack of a water supply. There were no springs in the immediate area of Laodicea as a result the resourceful people of Laodicea designed a system of stone pipes or aqueducts to bring their water from two other cities nearly six miles away.

The water came from the cold, pure waters of Colossae and the hot springs of Hierapolis, but by the time the waters reached the city through the various aqueducts created, the water was lukewarm. It started off either hot or cold, but it ended up as lukewarm.

Because of it being lukewarm it made people gag!

Jesus said Laodicea is neither cold (like the cold, pure waters of Colossae) nor hot (like the therapeutic hot springs of Hierapolis). Laodicea was lukewarm and provided neither refreshment for the spiritually weary nor healing for the spiritually sick (3:15-16)

Lukewarm: Being half hearted, complacent, apathetic and indifferent about ones spiritual condition and relationship with Christ.

Being lukewarm as a spiritual condition is so self-deceptive and dangerous that it takes the kind of shock we see in this letter to wake one up to its reality.

Verses 15-16 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Jesus is throwing water in their faces, challenging them because they mean so much to Him that He cannot simply stand by and watch them crash.

Verse 19 **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.**

Two things stand out about the spiritual state of the Church of Laodicea

1. They failed to recognize that material things are not a measure of spirituality

Verse 17a **Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing...'**

Contrast these word with what he said to the church of Smyrna who he commended (Rev 2:8, 9) **"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich)..."**

Luke 12:15 Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

(GNB) And he went on to say to them all, "Watch out and guard yourselves from every kind of greed; because your true life is not made up of the things you own, no matter how rich you may be."

It wasn't the money and wealth that was the problem it was the failure to stay connected with Christ and his purposes.

Deuteronomy 8:18 "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

2. They didn't perceive or see the deterioration of their spiritual condition

Verse 17b, 18 **...and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 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.**

When Jesus Knocks how do we respond?

Verse 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.**

Jesus knocking at the door is a metaphor to His dealing with our heart.

The strong words of correction are a call to the individuals in the church to respond and break away from their distractions and come into fellowship again.

Being lukewarm is being half hearted, complacent, apathetic and indifferent about ones spiritual condition and relationship with Christ.

People who are lukewarm:

- **Would rather talk about being faithful in attending the church instead of fruitful in their Christianity**
- **Are inward focused instead of outward**; they don't want to give up their rights

Staying Cold or Hot

- **Passion/desire** – know what God wants
- **Purpose** – know why your doing what your doing
- **Pressure** – do what ever it takes to get yourself out of the comfort zone
- **Partners/Associates** – Get around people who will help you succeed and keep you accountable. .
- **Progress/ growth** – keep growing spiritually and personally

Conclusion: In this New Year there will be plenty to pull on our attention that will merit our time. However lets make sure that we do not neglect the one of greatest significance. Make prayer and study of the word a priority and keep your relationship with Christ up to date.