

Tepid Christianity

In Revelation 3:15-16, we read that the saints of Laodicea were lukewarm. One wonders what sort of behavior would so provoke the Lord that He would threaten to spit them out.

Indeed there are lukewarm Christians today. They claim to be members of the local congregation, but they do not attend every assembly that they are able to attend (Heb. 10:25). They claim to support the work of the church, but they do not give of themselves first and also as God has prospered them (2 Cor. 8:3-5). They claim to submit to the elders, but when they disagree with a decision, they go their own way (1 Pet. 5:5). They claim to worship in spirit and in truth, but they do not sing with the saints (Eph. 5:19), nor search the scriptures during the sermon (Acts 17:11), nor examine themselves prior to breaking bread (1 Cor. 11:27-30). They claim to believe the Bible, but they do not frequently read it (2 Tim. 3:14-17). They claim to love the brethren, but they do not serve them (Jms. 2:14-17). They claim to honor the cross of Christ, but flee the responsibility of bearing their own (Matt. 16:24).

Church memberships are composed of some who are “on fire” for the Lord and some who are simply “consumers” of the services offered by the church. A satirical story appeared in *Lark News* that said a certain mega-church was warning freeloaders to fire up or get out, because the church would no longer provide free services to complacent pretenders. The story was satire, but the point is well made. Luther Blackmon (1970) wrote, “some of the most indifferent, unconcerned, lukewarm, lackadaisical and undependable people I have ever met, to be called Christians, were people who say they were ‘raised in the church’” (*Raised in the Church*, Truth Magazine XIV, 47, pp.10-11).

What then is the difference between an atheist who does not believe in Jesus and the saint who will not follow Jesus? Between the skeptic who rejects the Bible and the saint who does not read it? Between the fool who rejects God’s moral standards and the saint who ignores them? The sinner who rejects organized religion and the saint who does not assemble with the saints? Even between the [so-called] believer who rejects baptism and the saint who lives like he never was baptized?

For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,” and, “A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.” (2 Peter 2:21-22, NASB)

And if the peril in which such tepid saints place their souls is not bad enough, they further endanger others by what they endorse in the example they set, they bring reproach upon the church in the eyes of the world, and they have insulted the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).

God loved us enough to give His Son to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus loved us enough to endure that suffering for our salvation. Can we not light a fire in our faith to serve Him, and leave tepid Christianity behind? Fire up now, or feel the fire of hell later!

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