

The Great Commission

Revelation 3:14-22

I am beginning this morning a series on the Great Commission. You would think I would start out in Matthew 28 or Mark 16 or Luke 24 or John 20 when talking about the Great Commission but I want to start here in Revelation 3:14-22.

Lets begin.

What does Jesus want to say to the church? When we read this scripture we immediately focus on the part that says, "you are neither cold nor hot." But lets look at verse 15 "I know your deeds." Notice it doesn't say "I know your heart" or "I know your thoughts." It says "I know your deeds."

I believe this was a church full of people who loves the Lord. In fact this church remained an active and faithful church well into the 300's AD. In 361 a church council was held there to determine which book should be included in the canon of scripture. So the church has been around. But Jesus said "I know your deeds."

Francis Chan wrote a book called crazy love and in it he lists 18 examples of what a Luke warm Christian looks like:

1. Lukewarm people attend church fairly regularly. It is what is expected of them. Its what a good Christian does so they do it. Isaiah 29:13 says "These people come near me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up of rules taught by man."
2. Lukewarm people don't want to be saved from their sins; they only want to be saved from the penalty of their sin. They don't hate sin and aren't truly

sorry for it; they don't really believe this new life Jesus offers is any better than their old sinful one.

3. Lukewarm people are moved by stories about people who do radical things for Christ, yet they do not act. They leave the work and obedience to the more extreme Christians. Lukewarm people call "radical" what Jesus expected from all of his followers.
 4. Lukewarm people rarely share their faith with their neighbors, coworkers, family or friends. They do not want to be rejected, nor do they want to make people uncomfortable by talking about private issues like faith. Matthew 10: 32-33 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven."
 5. Lukewarm people are continually concerned with playing it safe; they are slaves to the god of control. This focus on safe living keeps them from sacrificing and risking for God.
- This is Jesus' rebuke to the church...because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. Remember, all of this is in the context of their deeds. Colossians 1:10 "And we pray this in order that we may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God."
 - I read a story about complacency in a book called 'Big for Little Reasons'. This is the excerpt. This story describes one quiet night in the spring.
 - Suddenly out of the night came a sound of wild geese flying. I ran to the house and breathlessly the excitement that I felt. What is to compare with wild geese across the moon? It might have ended there except for the sight of our tame mallard on the pond. They heard the wild call they once had heard. The honking out of the night sent little arrows of prompting deep into their wild yesterdays. Their wings fluttered a feeble response. the urge

to fly, to take their place in the sky for which God made them was sounding in their feathered breasts, but they never raised from the water. The matter had been settled long ago. The corn of the barnyard was too tempting! Now their desire to fly only made them uncomfortable. Temptation is always enjoyed at the price of losing the capacity to fly.

- Revelation 3: 18 says “I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can be rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.”
- Couple of things here: The gold isn’t the focus, it’s the refining process.
- White clothes are available only to those who have their garments washed in the blood of the Lamb.
 - This salve is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that opens your spiritual eyes.
- The church has for far too long played its games thinking that everything was good. Jesus is putting out the challenge to take a good look at itself and see what changes need to be made.
 - James 2:14-18
- The Great Commission involves going and doing. Your faith must be an active faith in every aspect of your life, both physically and spiritually.
- Have you seen yourself in some of these examples this morning? I know I have and it brought me to my knees.
- The great lie that our culture tells us is that your faith should be a private matter. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our faith should be brandished on our chest as a light to a broken and sinful world.