

# Lukewarm No More - Part 7

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life filled with the Holy Spirit, recognizing the pain of our lukewarmness, and seeking God's grace and forgiveness to experience spiritual fire and be used by God to touch people's lives for Christ.*

**Duration:** 9:39

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1-2, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37-39, John 10:10, Romans 3:23, Hebrews 12:29, Revelation 3:15-16

**Topics:** "Lukewarm"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power and grace of God to transform even the most broken and messed up individuals. He encourages the listeners to believe that nothing is too hard for God and that their hearts and hurts are not too difficult for Him to heal. The speaker also highlights the importance of giving and serving others, particularly in the context of missions. He shares a personal anecdote about experiencing overwhelming hospitality and reminds the audience that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Finally, the speaker acknowledges the challenges and disappointments that come with serving God, but emphasizes the need for encouragement and support within the church community.

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## Transcript

The most foolish thing many Christians are doing that is blocking the flow of energy to the mission fields of the world is guarding bitterness in their heart against a brother, a sister, a pastor, a mother, a father, a friend, a former spouse. And that's why when I preach missions, I preach grace. When I preach the uttermost parts, I preach forgiveness.

When I talk about Uzbekistan, I talk about the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin. When I talk about the Tibetans of North India and South China, I speak about the reality of total forgiveness and the grace awakening that can set us free from rejection, can set us free from hurt, and put us up on the wings of eagles so that we can be God's men and we can be God's women and move across the world touching people for Christ. You say, is this pie in the sky? Is this some kind of super-spirituality? No, it's just basic, normal Christian living that's described from Genesis to Revelation.

In fact, Jesus said in John's Gospel, I have come that you may have life and that you may have it in abundance. Being filled with the Spirit, knowing the reality of, as we used to call it in Bible college, being on fire for Christ is the normal Christian life. As I've already quoted from Hebrews, even God is described as a consuming fire.

There was a great man that joined William Booth many years ago. He wrote a book called Resurrection, Life, and Power. And in that book is one of the greatest definitions of fire that I've ever read.

And so I want to read it to you as we bring this message to a close. What is fire? Talking about spiritual fire, talking about what we read about in Revelation chapter 3. What is fire? God's fire. It is love, it is faith, it is hope, it is passion and purpose and determination.

It's utter devotion. It's divine discontent with formality, ceremonialism, lukewarmness, indifference, sham, noise, parade, and spiritual death. It's singleness of eye.

It's consecration unto death. It's God the Holy Ghost burning in and through a humble, holy, faithful man or woman. I want to ask you, is that a description of your life? It can be.

Not in the absence of struggles, pouts, tears. As those flags came up, and that's one of the best little flag ceremonies I've ever been to, and I've been to a lot of them, because of the way you've covered most of the missionaries, or a lot of your missionaries, and the flag as you touched that country came down. And as I've been involved in almost all of those countries and many more, I couldn't help but to start to weep as the flags came down, and I thought of the needs, and I thought of the struggles.

Fifty percent of all the missionaries in the world probably right now are discouraged. That's my whole life, is ministering to missionaries. Almost 40 years of it.

It's rough out there. The disappointments are heavy. The news that comes from the home front, if it does come, isn't always pleasant.

And in our own work, with our ships, with our people scattered across the world, one of the main tasks I have, my first task really, the pastoral care of our whole movement, of course working through other pastors and teachers across the globe, is to somehow see our people encouraged. Even as I say that, I feel a switch in my conscience because something I've said probably this morning may have discouraged you. Of course, if God is trying to rebuke you, if God is trying to bring you to repentance, it's because he wants to bless you.

It's because he wants to fill you. It's because he wants to use you. But there's no gain without pain.

The pain of acknowledging where you really are spiritually. The pain of acknowledging that you're drifting in your spiritual life. The pain of facing that you've become lukewarm in your Bible study.

Maybe lukewarm in your relationships. Maybe lukewarm in your family life. Maybe lukewarm in the whole area of missions.

Maybe lukewarm in terms of basic prayer and love, which is the greatest of all the gifts from God. We have whole chapters about it. Brothers and sisters, what we're sharing about this morning I know is very basic.

And probably some could easily say, oh, there's not enough content in this for our missions conference. And this is why I'm glad I'm here for more than just one little message. So please do stick around.

But the basic bottom line of missions is your heart and my heart. Are we filled with the Holy Spirit? Are we living in reality, purity, godliness, whatever our temperament? I know most of you probably are rejoicing that you're not similar to me in temperament. Fine.

But every temperament is highly gifted in sin. We are all sinners. As I was hiking Grand Canyon two days ago, I was listening to a tape of a woman known as the late Liz.

Dobson played her testimony on the radio again for the second time. The tape that brought more response than almost any tape he ever played. Her name was Gert.

She was a millionaireess. She went through three marriages and became an alcoholic before God touched her life around 53 years of age. This tape I was listening to was recorded 20 or 30 years ago.

And I had a flashback because I read the book, *The Late Liz in Spain* as a missionary in the early 1960s. What an amazing story. God taking such a toast, complete messed up alcoholic, turning her in to a trope of His grace and of His power.

That's what it's all about. Nothing is too hard for God. You're not too hard for God.

Your heart's not too hard for God. Your hurts are not too hard for God. The terrible things that have happened to you in your life already, disappointments and whatever else are not too hard for God.

This grace awakening that started at Calvary is yours. And when you know it, walk it. You'll be on fire every day.

Every day. The rest of your life. Don't miss it.

Don't play the fool. Don't swallow the American cultural pill to go with the crowd. Be filled and go God's way every day, whatever the cost.

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, we thank you for the power and the reality of your Holy Spirit. And Lord, I know, I don't know about others, but I stand before you so weak, so inadequate, so aware of my own needs, that without your grace and without your filling, that I can't do much, except get in a mess.

Lord, I would ask that in these days you'd meet with me afresh. Show me what books I should be reading. Show me who I should be sharing with and telephoning and loving, that I may know not just in word but in reality this fire that lives within and comes from above through your blessed Holy Spirit and through the Lord Jesus Christ through whom we pray.

Amen. Well, I feel sorry for those of you who just are only able to come to one service. I've been able to have three services already and just starting to really get off the end of the runway.

I praise God for your church. I don't just say that glibly or to pat you on the back because that wouldn't be right. But I believe that churches like this are the backbone of what God is attempting to do in world missions, whether it's in Brazil, where I've just been, or whether it's in Korea, one of the fastest growing new missionary sending bases in the world, or wherever it may be.

And I know it's going to be a battle to maintain this tremendous impetus that you have. And I'm excited about the way you use the faith promise system for seeing the funds come in because probably the second most influential person in my life was Oswald J. Smith who really discovered or launched that faith promise program. And I would just encourage you, get involved in that.

Even if it's just a small amount, maybe you've never given a mission before. A mission, by the way, is people. People loving people, people helping people, people saying to the rest of the world, that's what we

do at a missions conference, it's a time to vote.

And we're voting to serve and love and give to the rest of the world. The Bible says it's more blessed to give than receive. It's also easier, by the way.

I remember having a big meal in Norway one day with one of my Norwegian workers with their parents in. I was so overwhelmed by their hospitality, and this food, and they were really, really laying it on. And I said, well, I find this just overwhelming.

And a girl just shot across the table. She said, don't worry, it's just your pride. Just eat up.

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