

The Only Way To Heat Up The Luke Warm Church

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of overcoming lukewarmness in our faith by turning up the heat with conviction, encouragement, and repentance. It highlights the need for men to lead with character, for families to witness a living sermon through actions, and for individuals to consecrate their lives back to God, no matter how far they have fallen.

Scripture: Revelation 3:15, Revelation 3:19, Revelation 3:20, 1 Corinthians 10:12, Judges 16:22, James 1:22, Matthew 7:24, Proverbs 27:17, 2 Chronicles 7:14

Topics: "Overcoming Lukewarmness", "Leading with Character"

Description

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Transcript

Responsive, kind of removed from the things of God. Boy, that sounds like a lot of Christians today, doesn't it? And I'm not gonna hurry through this, so I might have to do part two. I don't know, but this is such an important topic.

And for you to be encouraged, knowing that a pastor is saying this, this might help you a little bit. I can relate to all those phrases. What? But you pastor a church.

Yeah, but I'm also a person. Same challenges. I can become half-hearted.

I can get unenthusiastic about the things of God. And morning worship at 6 a.m., it's been six years now that I've been doing it and coming and started, I think with just me and Phil and a guy named Jack and three of us. And then we get more people and more people.

And sometimes you can even lose that. I'm not real enthusiastic about it like I used to be. And I'm unresponsive sometimes to my own sermon preparation.

And because lukewarm is, have you ever had lukewarm coffee? Nothing really tastes good lukewarm. You're actually supposed to drink water that's room temperature. And I'd rather have it cold.

To my little daughters, I have five kids. To the two littlest ones, I always want ice in their water. Always want ice in their water.

And I try to sneak it and it doesn't work. They want that cold or the hot, of course, if you're making tea. And so there's something about either one of the, Jesus said, be cold or hot.

And me and Pastor Abram were talking, Tuesday we drove down to San Diego. I did a podcast with Ruslan. If you get a chance, check it out.

We'll be releasing some of the things. And he just released something, about 12-minute thing we did, talking about the chosen and the little flag they had there on the set. And then he texted me yesterday and goes, oh, hey, Dallas responded.

Jenkins, a producer, and really appreciate your comments. I'm like, whoa, gotta be careful what you say. I guess you never know who's listening.

But it was good, because I weigh those things through the filter of God's Word, of course. I wanna have the right heart. And so, a long story short, we are talking about this topic of being lukewarm.

And how that can come into the best of people. And how God usually revives us, is to wake us up from that lukewarm state. And how the enemy takes us out, is to get us in that lukewarm state.

And I've taught, and I think he mentioned, he's taught before, when I first began in ministry, that when Jesus said, if you're hot or cold, I wish you were lukewarm. I mean, I wish you were hot or cold, but if you're lukewarm, I'm gonna spew you out of my mouth. And for a while, I even taught, and it could be true, I don't know, but that I'd rather you be cold, or indifferent to the things of God, or on fire for the things of God, because we can tell who you are, to not be lukewarm.

But then the more I kind of read this, it could be that, you know, if you look at Laodicea, where it was positioned, the springs that came out of it, and the hot springs that were really good, and the cold, refreshing water. Have you ever, I've been on hikes up in the High Sierras, and you get that snow water, there's nothing like it. I don't care what they call it on the bottle in the store, but there's nothing like taking that cold water running down.

And people say, well, you've gotta be careful, you don't know if there's a dead deer in the water up the stream, or the algae. Okay, but it's good. It's good.

My body knows, hopefully, how to get rid of the poisons and the things. So I think, personally, it could be, Jesus is saying, I wish you were hot or cold, either type of those elements bring refreshment to the body. But if you're lukewarm, He says, I will vomit you out of my mouth.

One of the strongest statements He has ever made to a believer. I will vomit you out of my mouth. And of course, there's different positions on, you know, if a person can lose their salvation or not lose it, and I don't wanna get into those theological debates right now, but the point is, lukewarm is not good.

And here's some facts about being lukewarm, but here's the good thing about being lukewarm, is you can actually turn up the flame today. Today. So if this applies to you, you can turn up the flame today.

Today, you can get that heat going again. So here's a few facts you need to know. It's often a slow descent, and it takes time.

You don't become lukewarm, you're not on fire for God one day and lukewarm the next. It's a process of taking that, you make hot water on the stove, if you've ever done that, for tea or something, and it can stay hot for a little while, especially in the kettles with the lids that close, but you leave it there for a day, and it becomes that lukewarm temperature. Same thing with cold, that ice that eventually melts, and it becomes, so it's often a process, a slow descent, usually one compromise at a time.

One wrong decision at a time. One, I'm too busy for God at a time. I don't have time to read the Word like I used to.

And I actually, just this morning, I got up early and just, man, I want to get back into the Word. Even me saying this, to where I just meditate on it, and it really, because you can get into the formula. Anybody been there? Okay, I got through my four chapters.

In my Old Testament, I got through the four chapters. In my New Testament, let me close it and I'm good. Like, what did I just read? But it becomes systematic, in which it's not bad, but I want to say, Lord, just speak to me through Your Word, and I'm not gonna be in a hurry.

And I just stayed, believe it or not, I mentioned it in the sermon, not even knowing I was there, but about the Holy Spirit was in David and withdrew from Saul. And just the parallels there of God. Thank God you don't do that anymore, because now as a believer, you have the Holy Spirit, but you can quench and grieve the Spirit.

So it's not removed, but the influence is not there, to the degree it can be. And that's this whole debate over the filling of the Spirit, the anointing of the Spirit, being full of the Spirit. It's how much you surrender your life to the Holy Spirit's influence is what matters.

And often those who are holding back, they don't fully surrender, they are lukewarm. And as a result of being lukewarm, they quench and grieve the Holy Spirit. And those who like being lukewarm will not like this message.

But those who want to change will, because the heart is open, it's receptive. Again, I try to take some of the notes out, like what can I take out? And if I have to do part two, so be it, because it is important, and I want to talk about this for a minute. Here's facts.

It's comfortable, it's convenient, and it's non-confrontational. That's something about being a lukewarm Christian, or a lukewarm church. Anybody else getting frustrated at all the silent churches out there? Roe v. Wade's overturned, they don't say anything.

All these huge sexual perversion, deviant things are going on, and transgenic drag shows with little kids there, and not going to say anything. Boy, it fires me up. Hey, you don't have to say something every Sunday, but at least say something.

But lukewarm Christianity, lukewarm churches, they're comfortable. It's convenient for the masses to come. And it's non-confrontational.

Lukewarm is always non-confrontational. Unless you confront them about their lukewarm living, and they don't like it, and they get an attitude back with you, then they'll be confrontational. And I've noticed that over the years, preaching that I either upset the Pharisee or the lukewarm Christian.

Not even, unbelievers, I don't get even that many bad emails from unbelievers. It's mainly the lukewarm group, or the modern day Pharisee, that kind of rigid, arrogant, legalistic, in your face, you know, you don't wear a suit and tie, you're not using the King James Only, your wife wears pants, that's to be addressed down to here. Right, and they're just chiding, they're just, I don't know, it's not that funny, but you know, they're just so legalistic and arrogant.

And when you call them out, they don't like it, but then also the lukewarm church, which I call the Las Vegas Christian. Wine tasting at elder events, and Bible study, let's bring your wine, let's do wine testing. I just have one glass, well, it's the size of a goblet.

That holds a whole bottle. What do you mean? And so, and again, I'm not talking about people struggle, right, people struggle with things, but it's this blazing, in your face, kind of lukewarm lifestyle. They don't get confrontational for God's Word, for taking a stand for Christ, things are just kind of convenient, you know, let's add more potlucks and more studies, but never a prayer meeting.

Never a time of fasting. And lukewarm Christianity is comfortable. Have you ever been there? It's pretty comfortable.

I'm not upsetting anybody, I'm just doing my own thing, and man, I like this. Well, Jesus wasn't lukewarm. He was on fire.

But this word comfortable is interesting. I don't know if you've been following a lot, some of you are even into it more than I do, but there's new books coming out, and even what they call biohacking, and health and fitness and all these things, you watch all these podcasts now are growing, but they're talking about the importance of being uncomfortable. You know, cold water therapy, have you heard of that, where you just turn on the shower, or jump in a pool, you got ice, and it's like uncomfortable.

Or doing things that you're not comfortable with. And it is true, pushing the body beyond the realm of being comfortable. A comfortable couch potato is very unhealthy.

And the body was actually designed to be uncomfortable, to do hard things, to go out and push your body beyond that limit of being comfortable. And I talk a lot about fasting, you've heard me talk about fasting, it actually puts your body in a very uncomfortable state at the cellular level, but the results are huge, and very beneficial. Because the stem cells and the autophagy and the things like the body, all the stress starts to actually, it tells your immune system to increase, and your immunity is increased, and all these things, because the body's uncomfortable.

And I think that's good for a Christian, is to seek out those times of being uncomfortable. I might fast today, or I'm gonna try to read the Word at least an hour in the morning, an hour at night, and again, throwing out morning worship, throwing out things like that Wednesday night service. You know, it doesn't feel comfortable, watching the Lakers feels comfortable.

I don't know if they're still playing. Watching the Dodgers feels comfortable. I don't know if it's true, but I saw pictures of the attendance inside of the drag queens, nuns or drag queens, where the stadium's almost empty from this week.

I don't know if the picture was taken way before the game, I don't know. But that's encouraging, very encouraging. And people are not standing up for this sexual perversion, but the lukewarm church becomes comfortable, and Christianity is not comfortable.

That could be a good title for a book someday, or sermon. But we want that, don't you want that? I mean, I'm talking about these things, and you're probably going, oh, I bet he likes that. No, I don't like being uncomfortable.

Because what doesn't like being uncomfortable? The flesh. That's why we'll eat too much. Come on, let's see more heads shaking than that.

Sleep too much. Too much things we shouldn't be watching. I mean, I'd have to double check, and it might have to do with YouTube or different things, but most people are on their iPhone 12 hours a day.

And if you explain, you know, break it down, and I mean, I've done mine sometimes, and it's like eight hours today, what is that? Well, sermon, you're listening to things, your podcast, whatever, but it can begin to take you away from God. Anything that begins to take you away from God can be a form of idolatry. That's what idolatry is, and that's what happened to me.

I didn't have, my dad wasn't a Christian at the time, and it was into, you know, back then, big trucks, big loud motors, hunting, fishing, all these things that guys do, and then get into weight lifting, and all these things that are not fulfilling, and they take me away from the Lord. I begin to want, now I gotta make a lot of money. Now I gotta work seven days a week.

And all these things I begin to pursue, and that pursuit begins to take me away from Christ. Now, you've got good to work hard, good to do all these things, but the difference is, I didn't have things, things had me. And you don't put them in perspective, and that's what idolatry is.

Anything that gets in your way in your pursuit of God, and begins to distract you, and pull you away, and that's what lukewarm Christianity is. It's when you're comfortable, and it's convenient. And if you're feeling that way this morning, you might wanna change that direction.

Change that course. And I listed these things that I gave at a men's conference, I think many years ago. When it talks about lukewarm living, that's why now in the church, even in the church, Bible reading and prayer are called fanatical.

I think I've got these on the next screen here. Bible reading and prayer are called fanatical. While working 12 hours a day is called success.

Boy, isn't that true? We build our career and neglect our marriage. This is again in the lukewarm church, lukewarm Christians. Corporate executives are praised, and family men are frowned upon.

We've increased our wealth, but decreased our values. We search the heavens for answers, and turn from the one who created them. Pride is considered an asset, and humility a liability.

We know more about our favorite athletes than our wives and our children. We'd rather be seen leaving a bar than leaving a church. We praise our favorite team, yet fall asleep in church.

A lukewarm Christian hates the heat of conviction. A lukewarm Christian who doesn't want to repent hates the heat of conviction, do they not? Get that fire away from underneath me. Give me sooth sayings, easy

sayings.

Give us teachers who will tell us what we want to hear. They'll tickle our ears. And so somebody who's a lukewarm Christian who doesn't want to change, they don't like to be challenged.

It's like when God's Spirit was in David, but not in Saul. Saul became very jealous, very angry at David because of what God was doing in David. And that conviction, that conviction moved him to kill David.

Now, lukewarm Christians won't want to kill a solid Christian, but they want to kill their message. They don't want to hear it. They don't want to be challenged at all.

And I know you've been coming here a while, you've heard me say this, and I guess it's just a badge of honor now. But so many times, I'll be out in public, or run into people, or even hear like, oh, I've been coming to Westside for a while, my husband doesn't like it though. It's way too, what? Convicting.

I hear that a lot. Or even the husband comes, the wife doesn't. And nine times out of 10, they'll say they don't want to be challenged about how they're living.

Not living for God. And that's what lukewarm, it loves that lukewarm state. And it can destroy a church if the leadership becomes lukewarm, and it kind of filters down.

Most churches are a reflection of their leadership. I mean, let's be honest. Even the guys you watch on TV.

That's a reflection of their church, who they are. And it can destroy a church. Jeremiah said that the shepherds of his day have become dull-hearted, and they have not sought the Lord.

Dull-hearted, the image is like of a sword that becomes very dull. You have those knives at home, like I do, that they can't even cut an orange anymore. And after, what, a couple years, we ordered this nice set, and now I'm ready to order a new nice set.

Because nothing, it's like a grapefruit, and I've got to push down on it. It can't even cut a bagel in half. What happened? Over a series of time, it became dull.

It loses its edge. It loses its bite. It loses its cut.

And that's why now you understand the verse better as iron sharpens iron, that we are to sharpen each other. And that's one good thing about coming to church, and the reason a lot of people don't like to come to church is they don't like their iron sharpened. Right? Have you been there before? Oh, he's going to ask me if I've been reading the Bible.

Oh, shoot. Alright, this works good down here. I'll stand up here.

But you know, right? Remember you said you're going to read the Word every day for an hour? How's that going? Oh, it's not going great. Or hey, you were having marriage issues last month. Did you? Oh, geez.

And you just want to avoid people. Or I love this one. Pastor, you talked about fasting.

How's it going? I'm like, it's not going good. It didn't start yet. Thank you very much.

Iron sharpens iron. And often, if we know that there's something we don't want to be challenged about, we'll probably miss church that Sunday. Or two, correct? You ever been there? I'm telling you, if I didn't

have to be here every Sunday, it would be challenging.

Sometimes because of that iron sharpens iron. Especially when you preach. Hey, you said this last week.

What did you mean? Or I don't believe that way over the non-essentials, which is good. It's healthy dialogue. But it's iron sharpens iron.

And becoming teachable in these areas. But it will destroy a church. It will destroy a home.

A lukewarm home is not a place where God's Word thrives and flourishes. It's a place where there's lots of compromise. And there's movies and things we're watching that we shouldn't be.

And again, I haven't perfected this area. Still work in progress. But being lukewarm and settling for that, it turns down the temperature of God's Spirit in your home.

And that fire, that zeal for God is quenched because of this. And so, that's the introduction to Revelation 3. Let's see how long that took. Remember for the next service.

So Revelation 3.14, and this is Jesus again speaking. He said, "...and to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans." He said, I say this, and this is the Amen, the faithful and true witness. This is Jesus again describing Himself.

I'm the one saying this. I'm the faithful and true witness. I am the beginning of the creation of God.

Now, I want to throw this in there because this could take up a whole half hour. But a lot of times, you'll hear cults talk about Jesus is a created being. And many of those groups, they can't, He's not the Lord Jesus Christ.

God didn't come as man. He is a created being. And sometimes they'll use this Scripture along with another one.

But all we have to do is read 1 Colossians 1.6, "...for by Him all things were created that are in heaven and are on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." And of course, in John, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we behold the glory of the Father. And so we can see that from eternity, the triune nature of God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus the Son and the Father, these three are one.

If you try to think too much about it, you might get a headache because He's God and I'm not. I'm finite. My understanding is limited on that.

But the Bible seems to make it clear that God didn't say, okay, I'm going to create Jesus. Why is that? Because God had to die on the cross to make atonement for the sins of the world. Jesus the Son of God.

And it's a very important doctrine. And if somebody was a new believer and they didn't quite understand it, you know, that's a lot different than seasoned men and women of God teaching that God created Jesus. He's a created being.

He's no different than Michael the archangel or the devil himself. And even in Mormonism, they teach that Jesus created, I believe, and Satan was created, and God asked them the best plan for salvation, and God chose Jesus' plan and not the devil's. And this gets really convoluted.

Jehovah Witness, same belief about Jesus created. And if you keep taking something out to the farthest extreme, then you drift away from the Son of God. And you drift away from the perfect sacrifice.

And you get into this created concept. And if you just keep taking it out there, it can get into some very dangerous waters. But again, if there's a new believer, a teenager, like, hey, I don't understand this, you know, it's okay because you're asking questions and we can show you verses.

And it's an important topic though. Revelation 3, 15 and 16, Jesus said, I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot. So again, that makes it sound like one of those is beneficial.

You're either extreme is beneficial. A hot jacuzzi and a cold glass of water coming out of the snow. He said, I wish you were either cold or hot, which again, that kind of tells me that both of these could be beneficial.

And if you disagree with that, that's okay. All I have is what you're reading. And to the best of my ability, it sounds like either one of those options are to be chosen but not lukewarm.

Because you are lukewarm and neither you're cold nor are you hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth. I don't think Jesus likes lukewarmness in the church. And this Scripture, I think of all the churches over the years, this one has really stood out to me.

And those who teach, there's a different form of dispensationalism where there's different dispensations of the church. Mentioned in Revelation, you know, the church of Smyrna was this time and the church of Pergamos was this time. And if that's the case, then we are living in the Laodicean age.

And there's some truth to that. You know, right? The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. And what about the passage where kids will become blasphemous and not respecting parents? And all these lists and the time will come.

And it lists all these different things and pride and arrogance and unteachable and debauchery and lasciviousness and all these words that maybe don't mean a lot today, but they meant a lot back then. They still mean a lot. It's that rebellious having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

And that makes me sicker than anything else. A form of godliness, yet they'll promote abortion with Scripture. A form of godliness.

Sure, there's a God somewhere, but they'll deny the true power of God. And that form of godliness is snooty. Kind of arrogance.

It's having this appearance of being spiritual, but nonetheless, they are not. And then he goes on to say, because you say, I am rich, so this church was wealthy. And this might be a good reminder.

Any of you live in America? Okay, you're in the top 1% of the entire world in regard to financial blessings. Even if you're considered poor in America, you are in the top 1% of the world. When I realize that, I'm thinking, okay, this isn't just for Bill Gates and Musk and Amazon guy Bezo or athletes.

This is the majority of us, I believe. Because you say, I am rich, so this church is rich and wealthy, and I don't need anything. Isn't that so true? When people have so much wealth, they don't think they need anything.

And Jesus said, and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Jesus, what? Man, that's not very secret sensitive. We've got some new people here this morning.

This might have them never come back. And it's funny, Jesus never was concerned with that whatsoever. He was always concerned with speaking the truth in love.

And let the chips fall where they may. Remember when He had a massive amount of disciples until He told them about communion and what it represents. And they all left Him except for the few there, the main disciples.

Where can we go? You have the words of life. Because you say, I'm rich, and I don't need any of this stuff. I'm good.

Do you not know that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked? I came across an article I've quoted many years ago by Dan Delzel. Dan Delzel. He's a great, great author on blogs.

He said this. It's in a riveting blog written years ago, and I actually think we have it up on the screen. I want you guys to see the words that actually he wrote.

This is back when a Google executive died out in the ocean on his yacht. And the title was, Google Executive's Tragic Death Sends Sober Warning. He wrote this.

How do you go from being a devoted father of five and a successful Silicon Valley executive into a 51-year-old man convulsing from a fatal dose of heroin on your 50-foot yacht with a prostitute walking over your dying body to take a final sip of wine before leaving you to die? And that's exactly what happened. It was an amazing story. Because then he asked the question, how do tragedies like this take place? For the believer, it's one step at a time.

One step at a time. Big and successful is not necessarily successful in God's economy. Remember that, folks.

Big and successful is not always successful in God's economy. Actually, many times that can take you away from the Lord. In this group, they were bragging.

They were boasting. Have you ever done that? We've been guilty of that. We brag and we boast, and that's what this church was doing.

Look at this. Look what God is doing. We have a \$5 million budget each year.

We don't, but you know, it sounds good. And a \$7 million project going on next door. We're going to reach the inner-city kids.

That's great if you really are. And just bragging and boasting. Look at our big building.

Look at our big building. I remember, I won't get into details and stuff, but somebody told me that the church they're going to is somewhere over the mountain there. The little hill.

Man, look at this thing. Look what God did. I'm like, yeah, and I'm glad I don't have an \$80,000 a month rent, bill, mortgage, \$80,000 a month to pay for that big boy.

I like paid off. Now, that doesn't mean God doesn't open doors and grant people certain things. And as you know, we're kind of outgrowing this place.

It's not beyond the scope of reality that God will open a larger facility in the future. Hey, we're open. But we're not looking.

Because I still have a real estate license. I know how it works. I know all these commercial guys.

I can negotiate square footage price with tenant improvements. You've got to throw it in there. You've got to get it all ready.

You need to put \$500,000 into that thing. I can do that. But not going to do anything unless God directs.

God opens the door. God makes it clear. And so that's what these are bragging and boasting.

And they're sure not happy about \$80,000 a month payment now. After COVID and we have mass exodus of California. Most churches are, I don't know if you knew that, but most churches lost a lot of people.

A lot of people. We lost well over 200. But then God brought the same amount.

And so we grew actually a little bit. And then just holding that line. And the elders wanting to be on the same page.

Make sure you steward things correctly. And I'm sure nobody does things perfectly. You know, where would you have the money go versus this or missions or Care Net Pregnant Resource Center or this? And so there's different views on that, but as long as God is guiding and leading and you're not putting your trust and hope in the wealth.

Because I believe God does bless people for them to be a blessing. What about if all Christians have to be poor? If that's what God's standard. See, it's not money that's the root of all evil.

Right, Shane? You misquoted that. No, it's not money. Money's not the root of all evil.

Come on, somebody help me out here. Did you catch that? The love of money. The love of money is the root of all evil.

And God might bless a businessman to be a blessing to others. I don't know if they still do, because many years ago, but when we were looking for a building, I was talking to the real estate department at Hobby Lobby. Hobby Lobby? Oh yeah, you can tell I don't go there very much.

I can stay a couple hours in Home Depot, but Hobby Lobby, I don't know. But it's got some good things. Anyway, so, and you can verify all this.

I don't know if they still do it, maybe. But if I can find a distressed building, like at like 60% off value, they would have bought it for the church and given it to us for a dollar. Because they get the tax credit on the full retail, full value of the property.

But it's a distressed property. They're paying 60% off market value, which is really hard to find. And that's why they know it has to be God.

And God gave that. Thank God they can do that. And boy, did I look.

Boy, did I look. I almost, I looked at that school on Avenue L and 40th, right on L that went, I think it was worth 8 million. It went for 2.5 million.

And that kind of would have fit those criteria. But God didn't open that door. And so, God does bless people.

When we mentioned the, I don't remember what it was. Oh, the fire sprinklers. All the fire sprinklers.

I didn't know it cost that much. It's \$20,000 to redo all the watering system, the backup sprinklers. And it came in that week.

One lady mailed in 10,000, another 10,000. How is that? Well, see, we're not all supposed to be poor. God gives different things to different people.

The key is you have to make sure what you own doesn't own you. That's one good thing about giving is it helps keep that in perspective. So tithing isn't about, oh, the church needs my money.

Here we go on tithing. It is really about how much control God really has in your life. How much trust does God really have in your life? Do you trust God to give back to him a portion of what he asked for in his word? And I believe God loves a cheerful giver.

So we don't push it. We don't mention it. There's no plate.

There's no, I think 10% is a good number. But Bible's clear. God loves a cheerful giver.

Some people, 10%, 20%, 5%, it's really up to them and God. And I remember years ago, I don't know, I haven't seen them in a long time, but they didn't tithe and they made it clear they didn't. And okay, they don't believe in it.

And hey, no problem at all. But I'm just curious, who's paying for all the lights and stuff in the building next door for your kids and all the upgrades we had to do? And who flips that bill if it's not us who go here? Well, see, somebody has to pay for the, unless you want to cut off the air conditioning this summer. We can stop paying landscape, get rid of the wheat.

We can just do nothing. But God gives people these gifts to steward. And so you really have to think this concept.

It's not the church needs money. It's God, give it to a single mom through Care Net or something. But it's a good way to gauge who you're trusting in.

Because it's all His anyway. And nobody's really mastered this. Sometimes I'm convicted.

Should we give more? You know, or should we? And it's like, oh, but man, things are tense, right? It's hard right now, correct? You go to Costco with five kids. Compare it from three years ago. Morgan will get home like, \$250? You have four bags.

What? What happened? Yeah, we'll get off that one. They didn't need physical things. We don't need anything.

But they were lacking spiritually. Oh, that's a message for the church in America if I've ever heard one. They don't need anything physically.

No, we're good. No, you're not good. You're not good.

If you don't know God, you're not good. If you've drifted from Him, you need to get that in check. Wretched.

He said you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Can't you just use one of those words? Man! Well, but if you think about it, wretched means you're sunk into deep affliction or distress from want, anxiety, or grief. But this church would say, no, we're not.

But He'd say, yes, you are. You've sunk down. You're drifted from God.

You're not in a good spot. And although they put on a smile, I guarantee these types of believers have a lot of anxiety. Anytime a Christian is not walking fully with the Lord, there's anxiety often.

And I'm not minimizing anxiety and depression and different things, but there's a nearness to the Father that really will drive away a lot of that if it's a spiritual issue. Some have brain chemistry issues, and I've got all that. I understand that God heals sometimes, and sometimes it's a challenge.

But this wretched state. Miserable. They are miserable.

There's misfortune going on. They're poor. They're poor.

They are spiritually poor. Spiritually bankrupt. Isn't that what finances tend to do sometimes? If we're making enough money, we don't see our spiritual poverty.

It's often connected. Blind. Well, they're not physically blind.

What kind of blindness are they dealing with? They can't see or discern God's will and they are naked. There is no spiritual covering for them. And so Jesus said, I will counsel you.

I'm going to tell you. I'm going to instruct you to buy from Me gold that is refined in the fire. So if you're going through something, be encouraged.

It's okay if it's removing the dross. You know what the dross is? It's the impurities. Have you ever seen them put gold in this melting pot and all the stuff that comes off of it and the pure gold that comes out? It's beautiful.

It's incredible. And that's what Jesus said. Buy from Me the gold that's been refined in the fire and you'll be rich in spiritual things.

You'll have white garments that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed. And anoint your eyes with ointment that you may see. And what I like from this, Jesus doesn't force, but He does counsel you.

He doesn't force it. He counsels you. And the spiritual meaning of refined gold is there's nothing more pure.

And that's what happens when you surrender and give it back to God and tell Him to remove this lukewarm state and turn on the heat of the Holy Spirit again. White garments cover our sin. White garments cover our sin.

And there's that big word we've talked about before, imputed righteousness. It's your theological word for the day. Imputed righteousness means you get to put on the righteousness of Christ.

That's why you get to stand before God. Imputed righteousness. So I can stand before God righteous because of what Jesus did.

And I believe in Him. I repent. And therefore, I'm clothed with that righteousness.

It's an amazing theological term. In v. 19-20, as many as I love, Jesus says, as many as I love, I will never tell you anything you don't want to hear. Those I love, I always encourage.

No, no. Man, as many as I love, what do I do? I rebuke and chasten. Now, rebuke is verbal.

Chasten is a spanking from God. Ever had those? Man, God takes you out to the woodshed. Remember that? I remember my grandpa on the farms of Oklahoma did not want to go to that woodshed.

And they were... Man, they got like this. Even Bethel Baptist on Avenue K. I was one of their first students. And that teacher, she must have paddled me at least three times.

On different things. And you know what they were? Talking, chewing gum, and making noise. Boy, have we drifted far.

What can you do in the schools now? We need to bring back the paddle. I don't think they'd let us. And they even had holes in it.

They drilled holes in it. So it would just glide right through the wind a lot better because there's no resistance. So there's big holes in it.

And I could hear the guy saying, oh, oh! I'm like, I'm next. Dang it, Shane, why are you chewing gum in class? So that's what it is. I love you enough to rebuke you and tell you no, this is wrong.

And then I'm also, if you're not listening, I'm going to chastise. For those God loves, He disciplines. And so if you're going through something that's waking you up right now, that can be a very, very good thing.

But it can be a very bad thing if you become resentful towards God. And bitter. And upset.

And how could He? How could He? But that's what He does to those He loves. Because we have to be waken up. You know sometimes we have to have stupid knocked out of us? And it's not just a word.

It's not just a rebuke. Because reading the Bible rebukes us. Sermons rebuke us.

And we'll go, oh man, that's so true. That's so true. But, if He doesn't spank you, like you go home, you get the call, hey buddy, we're going to have to let you go.

We don't need your work anymore. Oh, now He's got your attention. Now you've got your attention.

Or you go home and man, I need to really make some changes. And you don't. Then you come out and you see the divorce papers on the table.

Well, now you might change. See, rebuke and chasten. He puts us in certain situations to wake us up.

Therefore, be zealous. Be zealous and repent. Be zealous.

What is that? It's almost like zealous is high energy. You're excited to do something. You want to get it done.

I'm zealous to go home and eat. Some of you might say. Right, but I'm zealous.

I'm zealous. Therefore, He said be zealous to repent. Don't say, oh my gosh, I have to repent.

Geez, Louise, I guess I will. No, there should be a zealousness, an excitement. Lord, I'm so excited to get back to You.

I'm so excited again to feel the fire of the Spirit. I'm so excited. God, I need to repent and get my relationship with You restored.

I'm zealous so my actions are going to follow my heart. Be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and... And I wonder how many doors He is knocking on this morning.

Or those listening later. You're hearing this. He's standing at the door knocking.

And it's a pretty interesting... I mean, there's some great theological discussions about this. Books on systematic theology. Or study Bibles.

Commentaries. What exactly this means. I know Greg Laurie likes to use it a lot for Harvest Crusades.

You know, telling unbelievers. And I don't know if it has to do with really unbelievers. I mean, I'm not going to discredit him for it, because it's actually a great point for them.

Hey, God's calling. But it's written to the church for believers who have drifted who are lukewarm. And He's saying, hey, I'm standing at the door knocking.

And you can take it a lot of different ways. But often, especially in the Jewish community, they will come in and fellowship dying with them. And He's going to save them.

And so I want to come back in. I'm on the outside right now. You've kept me on the outside.

You really don't have a passion and a zeal for me. You're not fully surrendered to me. I'm still outside waiting.

I'm waiting to come in. I'm standing at the door knocking. What will you do? What will you do with Jesus? If anyone hears my voice and He opens that door, I will come in and I will dine with Him and He with me, restoring that relationship.

So it's a beautiful picture that the church has become lukewarm. They've lost their fire. They've lost their zeal.

God is boring. They don't want to come to church that much. Definitely not going to come to Wednesday nights.

Definitely not going to be in prayer meetings. And they've lost that zeal. And Jesus says, I counsel you, buy from Me gold that's been refined in the fire.

I'm knocking at the door of your heart. Would you come and fully surrender your life again and get that lukewarm water on the heat of the burner? I'm counseling you to do that. I'm pleading with you.

I'm asking you to do that. Rebuke. I rebuke because I love, Jesus is saying.

I warn you because I care and I discipline you because I delight in your spiritual success. As I said earlier, chastening is to purify or refine by going through fire. I think it's important to define biblical love.

I don't know if I got it to them in time to put it up there okay. Biblical love. Concept of love is thrown around everywhere, right? Even the Dodgers.

Oh, we just love everyone. That's why we're going to have men dressed as women and nuns. That's perversion.

That's not love. What is biblical love? It's when a non-judgmental spirit tells the truth in spite of the pain it may cause. We'll have to say non-judgmental spirit, right? Because there's some people who like to tell you off.

But if it comes from the right heart, you've removed the plank from your eye first. Oh, I got that out. Now you can go to your brother and speak the truth in love.

So here's what it does. It's a non-judgmental spirit telling the truth in spite of the pain it may cause the other person or you if the relationship is fractured. But then it walks through life with you, encouraging you all the way.

All the way. I'll never forget. Many of you know at Grace Chapel, Pat Tanner.

One of their counselors over there, been a counselor for years. When I was first starting the church, we were going through a difficult thing with somebody. And I asked him and he goes, you've got to address it, but then make sure you walk through life with them after you drop the hammer.

In other words, the church discipline comes. But now I'm going to tell you how to get back on track. Now I'm going to... That's a good point because you don't just drop the hammer, apply church discipline, or speak and say you've got to work on this or else, and then you don't walk through life with them.

It's very important that you do that because that's genuine love. And so what we need to do, if you are lukewarm, you need to turn up the heat with conviction. You need to turn up the heat with encouragement, and you need to turn up the heat with repentance.

You need all three of those things. We need to convict people, but we also need to encourage them and then encourage them to repent. And you might think, well, he's talking to some high schooler or young adult or man who never comes to church.

No, this message is for all of us. This would apply to me as well. Any pastor, leadership, and elders, they've drifted.

They're not in God's Word like they used to. They've lost the fire. They've lost that zeal.

They're just going through the motions. They put on Netflix just to relax and unwind, and there's no passion for the things of God. They don't want to go to prayer meetings, and now they've fallen into a

lukewarm state.

Their family knows it. And they need to repent and say, God, restore that fire again. Restore that fire again.

And Jesus said, to Him who overcomes. To Him who overcomes. If you get back up and you keep fighting, get back up and keep fighting, yes, you may be fallen.

Yes, you may have blown it, but you get back up and keep fighting again. That's the Christian faith. You think I'm up here and I've walked a perfect path for the last 12 years planning this church? Man, how can you guys mess up? How is that possible? No, but you get back up and you say, for the grace of God, there go I. I'm going to be an overcomer.

Lord, I need Your help. And Jesus said, I will let you sit with Me on My throne. And also, I who overcame will sit with you with My Father.

He who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. In other words, wake up. I came across this quote from Ian Bounds.

It said, the church is looking for better methods. God is looking for better men. And then Robert Murray McShaney, a holy man is an awesome weapon in the hands of God.

I think the exact quote is, a holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God. But this applies to men today on Father's Day. A holy man set ablaze with the Spirit of God.

Not perfect, but repentant. He is an awesome weapon in the hands of God. And I'll close here.

Obviously, those listening later, you hear this morning, there's a very important word in the Bible that's often overlooked. And as believers, especially men, you need to remember this word and turn to it often. And that word is however.

However. However. Man, I've been beat up and I'm falling.

However. God calls me back. Things are not going well.

I've been messing up. I mean, the current rate of porn in the church is alarming. All kinds of things going on and men are just being beat up.

Ever relate falling back into an addiction that just takes you down? You have to remember that word, guys. However. And like David, strengthen yourself in the Lord.

And I often think in the situation of Samson. Did you know he was called of God? Can you be called of God and still fall like Samson? It happens a lot. So he was called of God, anointed by God.

That's different because you can be anointed, but not yet appointed, right? The calling and the anointing go hand in hand. Sometimes people are called, but it's not yet their time. God's preparing them.

But he was called of God, then anointed of God, and then he would go out and deliver the nation of Israel, deliver the children of Israel from the Philistines. This was God's man. No man was as strong as Samson.

And then eventually Delilah kept pestering him. And he said, that's okay. I will get up just like every other time before.

Many of you said that before. I'll just get up like every other time before. And he knew not that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him.

Oh my goodness. Thank God that won't happen to us because as believers we have the Holy Spirit, but we can quench and grieve the Holy Spirit and stop hearing His voice. And he said, I will go out as other times before.

And the Philistines rose up and they took him and they bound him. This time he couldn't break free. Have you ever been there where this time you can't break free? This time it's trying to take you out and take you down and you know you're just barely holding on.

Then they took out his eyes. And you can study that on your own. It's disgusting how they would do that.

The Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians. Cruel things. And how they would remove his eyes.

And now he's got these eye sockets. Tremendous pain. And you would say, he's done.

And they said, he's moving this millstone. Pushing this thing and he's treading at the mill press. And he's making this wheat for the Philistines as they mock his God.

They mock Samson's God. And they say, Dagon, our God, has delivered this mighty man of God. And at that point, I would be tremendously upset if that's how it ended.

But there's that word in there. What's that word? However, the hair on his head began to grow back. His strength was not in his hair.

It was in the anointing. And that was the sign. His consecration.

There's a place. If you can get back to that place of consecration, man. If you can get back to that place.

No matter how far you've fallen. No matter how far you've drifted. God said, however.

However, and I can only imagine Samson's probably repenting big time. Oh God, I'm so sorry. I've lost my strength.

I've lost my zeal. And God, I'm so sorry. And as he began to consecrate his life, he couldn't see anymore.

His eyes were out. But however, his hair began to grow back. His strength began to grow back.

And I can almost picture it. He's like, this is getting lighter. This is getting lighter.

Oh man. It's the anointing of God coming upon me again. And this little boy came out and he said, little lad, would you take me over to the, that I can just rest.

Take me over to the pillars. And he put his hand on the pillar and he put his hand on the other pillar. And he said, oh God, forgive me.

Remember me, Lord, this one last time. And he began to push with all his might. And the Bible says, and the whole coliseum came down and the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he

slew in his life.

And the power of God came upon him again. The anointing of God came upon him again. I need some men who will remember.

However, however, you might be lukewarm right now. However, get the fire of God back into your heart and into your life again. The only way to do this is to repent and return to God.

Our nation is looking for character. Our wives are looking for leaders. And our kids are looking for fathers.

Men, I want you to see this. Our families would rather see a sermon than hear one. No, nobody has to live this more than me.

My kids are always in one of the services and they hear it. They hear it. Trust me, I'd rather have them see it.

Because they can spot out false better than most people. The lectures you give me may be very wise and very true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do. For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but there's no misunderstanding, Dad, how you act and how you live.

They would rather see a sermon than hear one any day. So men, maybe you need to come to this altar this morning. Maybe you need to come to the prayer room.

But I would say more than anything, go home and live it out. I was reading an A.W. Tozer's biography many years ago. And some people thought he was kind of cold and indifferent, but I think he was spot on.

He would preach sometimes and he would tell people, he would tell the men, he'd say, don't come up here and cry about it, go home and live it out. And if I could have a dollar for every tear that was shed, but no change took place, it's what happens after here. Don't let just an emotional response create some emotional excitement and then go home and live it out.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/D5nc7VB13DE.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/the-only-way-to-heat-up-the-luke-warm-church/>

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