



## Articles and Sermons :: Fighting Luke-Warmness

**Fighting Luke-Warmness - posted by jstrang (), on: 2014/9/10 16:05**

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### Intro

The first thing I must ask is this, is there even a need to do such a thing in the professing Christian church today? Is there a need in the individual, those of us who make up the church? The answer for us in the Western World is all too obvious.

My problem is not found to be with governments, those who are unconverted, politicians and such, but mine is with those who take the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and sit as if they were deaf, blind and ignorant, as if Christ never really took upon Himself the wrath of God, the wrath we deserved. It is my opinion, and the fruit that seems to be so very apparent (Luke 6:44), that many people are more related to John 3:36 than truly understanding of John 3:16. Because of this, my prayer and my concern is heavy that we would wake-up and embrace the realities, the power and the person of Christ "authentically."

Whether it is because many are unregenerate or because so many are "back-sliding," a term not found in Scripture, or purely lazy, only the Lord really knows. I firmly believe we have a great many who have never truly come to embrace the Jesus Christ of the Bible, but make a personal profession to a concocted form of a "cheap-christ" that was formed in the personal beliefs of one's own mind. Whichever be the case, it is not my intent to make this case and point, but rather to call us all out of the paths of superficiality and luke-warmness unto a life of passionate pursuit of Jesus Christ and the will of God.

### Thoughts to Consider

Before moving forward, let me pose something to think about. Let's say you are going to set out onto the battlefield today. Would you go out on a horse with a musket and bayonet from the Civil War? Would you not want the latest gear, the latest weapons, the fastest transportation and the most stealth way of fighting? In fighting spiritual battles, would we not want all the armor of God? Do we not want the entire armor and fight apparel "the belt, the breastplate, the shoes, the shield, the helmet, the sword" and with this all an alertness, perseverance and prayer?

Let me take this a bit further. When we want to beat a certain sin in our life, we do not say, "Let me go out and commit more of this sin so that I can beat this sin." Do you see the absolute insanity of such a thought? If we are going to fight our sin, should not Christ and His true grace be the bow we pull back, Romans 8:13 be the arrow we grasp and our sin be the bull's eye? Yet I submit to you, when it comes to luke-warmness in the Christian life and in the professing church, we are doing exactly the opposite; this most certainly is the case in a great majority of people's private lives and without a doubt from the pulpit week in and week out. But what do I mean that we are doing this both privately (inwardly) and from the pulpit (corporately)? Give me room to explain.

"To merely read, study or become a scholar of the Bible to gain knowledge is one thing, but to have the Scriptures ravage the old man that still tries to live within, to break him, and to be remade by the true Gospel of grace is entirely another thing" I much prefer the latter. -JS

### No Wonder Why

Today, there is no wonder why the individuals who sit in churches of various denominations are luke-warm, it's because use so many of the teacher's and preacher's only arsenal against luke-warmness is by using various methods o

f luke-warm, pragmatic, humanism, and they then struggle to no end to find a new method, a new way, a new strategy, a new sermon series, a new approach, or a new business model. When I read of the Apostle Paul deciding to know nothing among the very carnal and very young Corinthian church except Jesus Christ and him crucified, I see a far difference from the centering and passion of most sermons and messages of today.

If we want to see people lit on fire for a passion for Christ, we don't preach messages about passion. If we want to see people come to intimately know and walk with Christ, we don't present them messages about how to have a better life. If we want to fight against luke-warmness for the people in our churches, then we don't present a luke-warm messages built on text book preaching/teaching that is based in pragmatic humanism. Here is what we ought to do, give them Christ! Christ in all His power, His deity, His beauty, His reality; Christ in the power of His Gospel, scandalous in appearance, impossible in human thought we need to give Christ impossible to do if you don't have Him. What did the disciples give the beggar at the temple in the book of Acts? Jesus Christ!

Now for a minute, let me say this about being pragmatic. Pragmatism, or pragmatic messages, that are birthed for the purposes of developing a message or merely to help or better a person most often are powerless, spiritless and futile, leaving no eternal value towards heavenly things. They leave the listeners amused, entertained, ear-tickled and luke-warm. These never do more than temporarily move fleshly emotions. On the contrary, messages that are truly in the power and demonstration of the Spirit of God are always pragmatic in that the Holy Spirit brings about conviction, the need for repentance and further sanctification. In this way, the way of being centered on God's glory, His honor, His Son and preeminence, these messages are pragmatic as they are birthed of God and for the eternal best for the hearers, thereby bringing about deep rooted change in the soul of men and outflows of passionate Christian behavior. (I highly recommend listening to a message entitled, Ten Shekels and a Shirt by Paris Reidhead.)

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. Again, we see Paul was not concerned with plausible words of wisdom but that men might place their faith in God and His power and nothing of the wisdom of man. Mere teaching alone, whether gifted to be a teacher or not, is not enough for the church; hence why there are many gifts in the body. We need not only biblical and solid teaching, but we need a healthy mix of exhortation, admonishment, correction and discipline as well. We need men who are gifted by God to be preachers and especially humble men gifted to be true, notice I said humble and true, prophets. In this day especially, we do not need any more boys with their little degrees who think they are relevant communicators. We need men of God who have been mulled over and ravaged by God, this through His Word, the convictions of His Spirit and in the early morning hours of privately walking with Him.

We put men into pulpits because they have degrees. But you can have 32 of them and still be frozen!

-Leonard Ravenhill

#### Some Statistics

Look below at some of these statistics. Notice the date that these studies were released; how much worse are we now?

Here is a report of a survey of 10,000 Protestant ministers conducted by Sociologist Jeffrey Hadden; 7,441 responded to the questions. Here are the horrifying statistics. Read them, then wonder why God is grieved with our spiritual life. (I am indebted to Christ for the Nations, May 1982, for this information.)

Bible inspired Word of God?

82% of Methodists said No

81% of Presbyterians said No

89% of Episcopalians said No

57% of American Lutherans said No

Jesus the Son of God?

82% of Methodists said "No"

81% of Presbyterians said "No"

89% of Episcopalians said "No"

75% of American Lutherans said "No"

Physical resurrection of Jesus?

51% of Methodists said "No"

35% of Presbyterians said "No"

30% of Episcopalians said "No"

33% of Baptists said "No"

13% of American Lutherans said "No"

"The August 1982 issue of Pulpit Helps contains this statement: "In a recent survey of one of the large, well-known theological colleges of the United States, 93% of the students studying for the ministry stated: "I have no devotional life."™ What a crop of future preachers! How can a man speak for God if he does not walk with God?"

If we have a desire to overcome luke-warmness in our own life or within the church at large, we must fill our eyes, our ears, our minds, our desires with that of Christ. We must fix our attentions on the Author and Perfecter of our faith, we must be transformed by the renewal of our minds, and we must set our minds on things above and not of the earth. As long as our eye is fixed upon entertainments of the flesh, the news and social media, games, sports, TV and the like, we will never, I mean never, come out from the land of Egypt, come out of the darkness of the day, and come out of our luke-warmness. We may just prove that many of us are looking back, with lustful thoughts and intentions, just like Lot's wife and find that we are turned to a pillar of salt and given the words from our Lord, "Be away from Me, I never knew you."

Choose this day whom you will serve. "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, but turn, in full surrender, to the Lord of glory. Let Him take you out of the sure death of luke-warmness and into a deep, passionate and authentic walk of reality with Him.

"But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

"But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first."

"I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth."

#### Our Real Problem

Our real problem all comes down to this, what are we doing with Jesus Christ? Do we bench Him on the sidelines while believing there is someone better to occupy our time with? Do we shelf Him for all the silly little doctrines of men, philoso

phies and imaginary feel good quotes? Christ truly is a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles.

Let me ask you, What does light have to do with darkness? What does Christ have to do with false idols, false gods, and the darkness of this world? May we continue to sit in our luke-warmness, indulging the flesh with continuous pleasures of this world, using grace as a means to sin may it never be!

Come out of Egypt; come out of the shallowness of weak, powerless and convictionless lifestyles. Turn, whole heartedly, with full submission, to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Run, Run, Run.

### My Prayer

My prayer for my church congregation, the local church, and the church at large. Lord, I beseech Thee, shew forth Thy glory more and more; and grant that much people in this place may be enabled to believe on Thee. Oh that they may not only received the Word with joy for a season, but bring forth fruit unto perfection. (George Whitefield, 1739)

I'll tell you a story. The Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 1675 was acquainted with Mr. Butterton the actor. One day the Archbishop . . . said to Butterton . . . pray inform me Mr. Butterton, what is the reason you actors on stage can affect your congregations with speaking of things imaginary, as if they were real, while we in church speak of things real, which our congregations only receive as if they were imaginary? Why my Lord, says Butterton, the reason is very plain. We actors on stage speak of things imaginary, as if they were real and you in the pulpit speak of things real as if they were imaginary.

Therefore, says Whitefield, I will bawl, I will not be a velvet-mouthed preacher.

~George Whitefield

Ephesians 6:10-18

1 Corinthians 2:2

Acts 3:6

1. character or conduct that emphasizes practicality. 2. a philosophical movement or system having various forms, but generally stressing practical consequences as constituting the essential criterion in determining meaning, truth, or value. Webster's Online Dictionary

1 Corinthians 2:3-5

1 Corinthians 14:1

Not saying pursuing a degree is wrong, but for many it is nothing more than this, a degree.

Time truly does not matter, just this author's time frame

Revival God's Way, pg 145, Leonard Ravenhill, Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 1983, used by permission. This can also be found in the book Realities of a True Christian pages 17 & 18.

Leonard Ravenhill ' Revival God's Way, pg. 148, Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 1983, used by permission. This can also be found in page 29 of Realities of a True Christian

Hebrews 12:2

Romans 12:2

Colossians 3:1, 2

Matthew 7:21-23

Hebrews 3:15

2 Corinthians 11:3

Revelation 2:4

Revelation 3:15, 16

1 Corinthians 1:23

2 Corinthians 6:14

2 Corinthians 6:15

Romans 6:15