Please turn with me in your Bibles to Revelation chapter three. And let's read verses 14-22.

**Revelation 3:14-22 (NKJV)**

14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,  
   ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning  
   of the creation of God:

15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were  
   cold or hot.

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you  
   out of My mouth.

17 Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—
   and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;  
   and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your  
   nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that  
   you may see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the  
   door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also  
   overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’”
INTRODUCTION

It's a story we've all known since we were little kids, the story of "Goldylocks and The Three Bears."

You remember Goldylocks was taking a walk through the woods one day when she came across a house in the middle of the forest. As Goldylocks carefully opens the door, she soon discovers the house is empty.

Pretty soon she "catches a whiff" of some fresh-cooked porrage coming from the kitchen. Upon entering the kitchen, Goldylocks discovers three bowls left sitting on the table.

Realizing she has the house all to herself, Goldylocks decides to help herself to the porrage.

*First she samples PAPA BEAR'S bowl of porrage, and she starts fanning her mouth saying, "this porrage is too hot!"

*Then she samples MAMA BEAR'S bowl of porrage and wrinkles up her nose as she proclaims, "this porrage is too cold!"

*Then Goldylocks notices a third bowl sitting on a high chair near the kitchen table. It was BABY BEAR'S bowl. She slowly lifts the spoon to her mouth thinking it might be "scalding hot" or "ice cold." She takes a bite and a pleasant smile comes across her face as she exclaims, "This porrage isn't too hot or too cold, it's j-u-s-s-s-s-s-s-st r-i-g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g-h!
Not too hot........Not too cold........but JUST RIGHT! Not only does that describe the porridge Goldlylocks tasted from Baby Bear’s bowl in a children’s fairy tale, it also describes the condition of the Laodicean Church here in Revelation 3.

Jesus says in verses 15, 16.............

15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

The Church at Laodicea was a real Church that existed almost 2,000 years ago in the city of Laodicea.

The city of Laodicea was located about 100 miles east of Ephesus in Asia Minor or what we know today as the country of Turkey. The city was named after Laodice, the wife of Antiochus II of Syria, who ruled over the city.

Laodicea was a “filthy rich” city. And from the things Jesus says in His letter to this Church, it is very obvious the wealth of the city had greatly affected the Church of Laodicea. Most of the time great wealth produces “rotten living.” There are few “rich people” who serve God and there are few “rich Churches” that are deeply spiritual.

As a rule, “rich people” and “rich Churches” tend to be far away from God. Such was the case of the Church in Laodicea.
Now, why should a Church that existed almost 2,000 years ago in the City of Laodicea mean anything to us? Because prophetically speaking the Church at Laodicea is a description of the Church in the final days before the return of Jesus Christ. In other words, the Church of Laodicea is a portrait of the Church in our day and time.

There are three key points we want to focus on in our text:

First of all, let's consider ............

I. The CRITICAL CONDITION of Lukewarmness

Look again at VERSES 15, 16

Revelation 3:15-17 (NKJV)

15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

17 Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing---and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.”

1. When Jesus says, “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot” He is telling the Church at Laodicea that she is in the most critical condition a Church can possibly be in and that is “a LUKEWARM condition!
2. Jesus did not charge the Church at Laodicea with “losing her first love” like the Church at Ephesus............or with worshipping pagan idols like the Church at Pergamos............or with practicing and tolerating gross sexual immorality like the Church at Thyratira.

He charged the Church at Laodicea with neither being spiritually hot or spiritually cold, but being spiritually “lukewarm.”

3. Why does Jesus condemn “spiritual lukewarmness” as the most critical condition of all? Because it is possible for a Christian or even an entire Church to be spiritually lukewarm and not even realize it!

If a man is sick, but doesn’t even realize he is sick, he is in a very critical condition, because he likely will not do anything to improve his condition.

4. A Christian who is “lukewarm” is in critical condition because he is “spiritually sick” and doesn’t even realize it! A lukewarm Christian will believe that because he or she hasn’t totally denounced Christianity, and because they continue to practice the rituals and traditions of the Church that they have practiced since they were a little kid, that everything is fine, when in reality “spiritual lukewarmness” is just one degree shy of “spiritual death.”
5. The late George D. Watson once said, “As a rule, lukewarmness of spirit is so decent and well-behaved, that it chloroforms its victim and kills him without a scream of terror. This is what makes it so awfully fatal. While open sin slays its hundreds, nice, respectable lukewarmness slays its tens of thousands.”

6. How can I know if I am a “lukewarm” Christian? What are its symptoms? Well the symptoms of “lukewarmness” can be summed up in a single word: **INDIFFERENCE**.

(A) A lukewarm Christian is indifferent towards GOD.

Mark 7:6 (NKJV) He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

‘This people honors Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.

(B) A lukewarm Christian is indifferent towards the needs of fellow CHRISTIANS.

James 2:15-17 (NKJV)

15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,

16 and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

(C) A lukewarm Christian is indifferent towards STUDYING the BIBLE.

Hebrews 5:12 (NKJV) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.
A lukewarm Christian is indifferent about his PRAYER life.

James 4:3b (NKJV)  “Yet you do not have because you do not ask.”

An attitude of indifference permeates every area of a lukewarm Christian's life. He worships with an attitude of indifference.... sings with an attitude of indifference......takes communion with an attitude of indifference.......and listens to the preaching of God's Word with an attitude of indifference.

A lukewarm Christian is perfectly satisfied with “status quo” Christianity, a Christianity that's “not too hot, and not too cold, but just right!”

Secondly, let's consider...........

II. The CAUSE of Lukewarmness

1. Lukewarmness does not come over a Christian overnight.
   Lukewarmness slowly courses through our mind, heart and spirit like a deadly poison over a period of months or even years. In fact, it is so subtle and so in-perceptible, we won't even know it has happened.

2. The primary cause of lukewarmness is substituting RELIGIOUS activity for a spiritual RELATIONSHIP with God.

   Revelation 3:17 (NKJV)  Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing---and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.”
3. What is Jesus condemning them for? He is condemning them for their “self-sufficiency.” They had settled for **A SELF-FOCUSED RELIGION** instead of **A GOD-FOCUSED RELATIONSHIP**.

4. The Lord demands nothing less than “whole-hearted love and devotion” to Him.

   **Mark 12:30 (NKJV)** “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”

   **Luke 9:23 (NKJV)** Then He said to them, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

5. I believe a lot of Christians are “working so hard at being a good Christian” that they have totally neglected a close personal relationship with the LORD.

   If your Christian life is all about how many times you go to Church........and how much you give to the Church........ and how many years you have been a member of the Church...... and what positions you hold in the Church........and how many good deeds you do for others outside the Church........there's a real good chance “a spirit of lukewarmness” has overtaken you like a deadly disease and you don't even realize it.

6. **The cause of lukewarmness is SELF-FOCUSED RELIGION instead of A GOD-FOCUSED RELATIONSHIP.**
Well we have considered **THE CRITICAL CONDITION OF LUKEWARMNESS** and **THE CAUSE OF LUKEWARMNESS**.

Finally, let's consider…..

### III. The **CURE** For Lukewarmness

**Revelation 3:18,19 (NKJV)**

18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

1. There is only one cure for lukewarmness and that is to replace our cold, empty, lifeless, self-reliant religion with a genuine, life-giving, life-changing relationship with the LORD.

2. The spiritual condition of the lukewarm Laodiceans could be summed up these three simple statements:

   They were spiritually **POOR**. They were spiritually **NAKED**. And they were spiritually **BLIND**.

3. Notice the three provisions the Lord offers them to cure these conditions in **verse 18**.

* For their **SPIRITUAL POVERTY** Jesus offers them His **GOLD** refined in fire.  (v.18a)

   **GOLD** symbolizes the spiritual **RICHES** that are ours' in Christ Jesus.  Christ is rich in **GRACE**, rich in **MERCY**, and rich in **LOVE**.  Without these great riches of Christ you and I have nothing! We are lowly paupers.

* For their **SPIRITUAL NAKEDNESS** Jesus offers **WHITE GARMENTS**.  (v. 18b)

   **WHITE GARMENTS** symbolizes the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of Christ.  God doesn't accept us just because we have been baptized or because we go to Church every Sunday or because we put such and such amount in the offering plate, or because we serve in a certain position in the Church.  **GOD** only accepts us when we are clothed with the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of Christ. It is the righteousness of Christ that covers over the shameful nakedness of our sins.

* For their **SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS** Jesus offers His **EYE SALVE**.

   **THE EYE SALVE** symbolizes spiritual **DISCERNMENT**.  Until the Lord opens our eyes we can see only our good works and our good morals and our good behavior. But when our eyes are opened we see God's glory, God's greatness, and God's holiness.
The hot water heater in our home is so un-predictable. One time you might get in the shower and the water is so scalding hot you could boil a chicken in it. But then the next you get in the shower the water is lukewarm, even border-line cool.

Now I don’t know about you, but I would rather have my shower water scalding hot than lukewarm.

When it comes to our commitment to the Lord, He would rather we be scalding hot than lukewarm.

God isn’t concerned with all the “outward formalities” of our religion. Our Church attendance.......our giving.......our worship.....our good deeds.......our acts of Christian service means absolutely nothing to GOD if we have no personal relationship with Him.

Lukewarm Christian, the Lord is lovingly and patiently calling to you this morning. He is calling for you to “be zealous and repent.”

(LEAD INTO INVITATION)