



DATE: December 4, 2011 Communion

TEXT: Revelation 3: 14-22

TITLE: "Open the Door"

This morning we are looking at the 7th and final church. We are also looking at one of the "famous" verses in the Bible.... the "stand at the door knocking verse.

I will begin by giving three facts about Laodicea. First, it was a very, very wealthy city. It was the banking center of the region. The population was rich and comfortable. Second, it was the medical center of the region.... it produced a ointment for the eyes that was famous. Third, it had an unfortunate water situation. Located a few miles uphill was a city famous for it's hot springs. Located a few miles downhill was a city that had wonderful cold springs. Laodicea received it's water from the uphill city through pipes. It was lukewarm and not very good. Getting cold water was almost impossible.

Kim, while in college, took a group of students to a camp in Colorado. They stopped at a hotel one night that received all it's water from hot springs. Kim said it was awful. They had no cold water. You brushed your teeth in hot water. The toilet was hot and steamy. The shower

was too hot. It was awful. This is the image we get in our text.

I am going to do something different this morning. In preparation for Communion I am going to share one and only one lesson.

Lesson # 1 Contrast a life that is lukewarm in faith to a life that is alive and vital in faith.

First, we will look at a lukewarm church and individual. *Rev 3:15-16* states....

15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

These are possibly the harshest words of Jesus in the entire bible. Laodicea had Christians that were comfortable. They were wealthy and had incorporated Christianity into their lifestyle. They were not excited about their faith... but they did declare faith in Jesus Christ.... they were lukewarm.

Look again at this terrible, terrible condemnation from Jesus.... “I will spit you out of my mouth.” Jesus is saying these Christians nauseate him. Jesus says he would rather that they did not profess faith at all... that they were cold.... then be lukewarm. Isn't this strange. The *Pulpit outline* states this...

Jesus says: it is better for one to be cold than lukewarm. This is utterly shocking: Christ says it is better for a person to have no commitment whatsoever to Christ than to him to be lukewarm. Why? How could this be? Because a lukewarm person does not know that he needs clothing or heat. A cold person knows he needs clothing and heat.

A lukewarm person makes a false profession. (The people of Laodemia) equated wealth and prosperity with spirituality. They became self sufficient, independent, self-centered and prideful.

Worship, bible study, prayer, missions, witnessing all were done as a matter of form and as a part of the normal activity of the church. There was no hunger and thirst after God, no sense fo deep seated need, no desire God’s Word, no burden for the lost. Simply speaking the church was self-sufficient and comfortable.

Let me say... we can see this trap is easy to fall into... especially we who live in this great land. We are wealthy. We are rich. We must be very, very careful we do not fall into the trap of Laodemia.

I want to contrast this with the picture of Jesus. Let us see what he offers us. *Rev 3: 20*

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Here is one of the most beautiful picture in all of scripture. First, notice that Jesus is speaking to the individual.... it is to “anyone”. It is not Jesus’ desire to “spit His people out of his mouth.” Jesus knocks at the doors of our lives. Jesus wants to be in our lives. But we must act! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we must open the door. We must invite Christ into our lives.

Ant notice the result of the wonderful invitation. Jesus will come and eat with us. This is the picture of intimacy. We will be part of His family.

I close this sermon with an illustration. It is the illustration that is used in scripture.... a picture of marriage. I want to ask a series of questions

How many here who are married believe their spouse is perfect? No one
 How many her expect their spouse will be perfect in the future? No one

What do you expect of your spouse?

How many here expect their spouse to be loving?

How many expect our spouse to be faithful?

How many here expect their spouse to be considerate?

How many expect your spouse to spend some time with you?

How many expect their spouse to listen and talk to you?

How many here expect their spouse to be caring?

How many here expect their spouse to be intimate... not just physical intimacy but emotional?

All of these are legitimate expectations of a spouse. When these expectations are not met... marriage can be very unhappy.

At a wedding ceremony what exactly is promised? The vows says... “do you vow to love honor and obey your wife or your husband.” It’s a vow of surrender. It a vow saying... “I will no longer first consider myself, I will consider you above myself.” It is a vow to give up selfishness and self-centeredness. When this vow is broken by one or both of the spouses

marriage is miserable. Marriage becomes lukewarm. Nothing is worse than a lukewarm marriage.... usually one or both of the people would rather not be married.

This is the message from our text. Jesus is knocking on the door of our lives.

Jesus is not asking for mere belief... that is lukewarm
 Jesus is not asking for you Sunday mornings... that is lukewarm
 Jesus is not even asking for your good, moral actions... that is lukewarm

Jesus is knocking asking for your vows and your intimacy. Let me say that again.... Jesus is asking for your vows and your intimacy.

He does not expect us to be perfect... He knows that is impossible. But He does desire...

Our love
 Our faithfulness
 our consideration,
 our time,
 our conversations
 our emotional intimacy

In other words, Jesus desires a relationship of love. There is never a time when Christ is not with us. We must live knowing of Christ's presence and his love. Of course we want to worship Him. Of course we want to spend time in His Word. Of course we want to be in constant prayer with Him. He loves us and we love Him.

Here is the challenge as we come to communion. Is your faith hot? Or is it lukewarm?

Only you and the Lord know. I invite you this morning to open the door. Maybe for the first time.... maybe for the 1000 th time. Open the door. “Jesus I commit myself to you... totally and completely surrender to you.” As you come to the table this morning... confess your failures, receive forgiveness, come to the cross. Come to Jesus. Surrender.

I close with this verse...*Rev 3:21*

21 To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Come, sit on the throne with our Lord for eternity... **Come**

Amen