



Date 07/11/2021

Healthy Church Series
Feel the Zeal
 Revelation 3:14-22

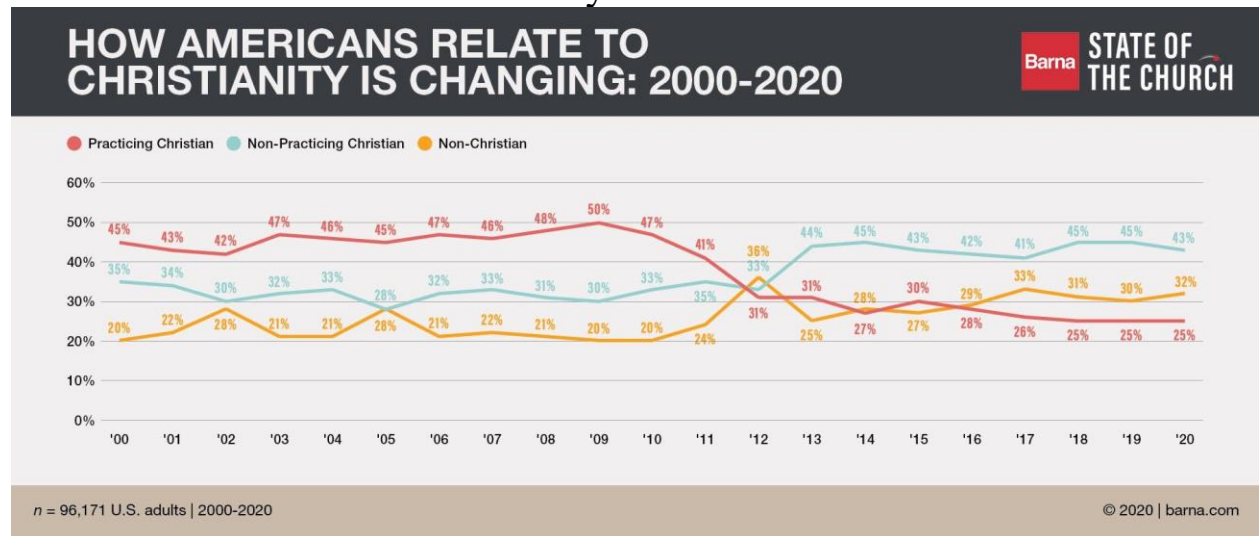
Lukewarm = lack of spiritual zeal, enthusiasm.

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Rom 12:11

Lukewarm was Laodicea’s character. **Lost their focus.**

- **Social-oriented churches** (like to get together)
- **Tradition** (identify with Christianity and its practices)
- **Bandwagon** (everyone else is doing church)
- **Self-Sufficient** (Laodicea) (John 15:5)

Can the church be lukewarm today?



What was Jesus' **MOTIVE** for his rebuke? **LOVE!**

*Those I whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Rev 3:19
(see also Hebrews 12:10-11, Proverbs 3:11)*

Remedies for Lukewarmness

Remedy #1 to Feel the Zeal (v18): “Buy” from Jesus three things:

- **“Buy” Pure Gold** → Jesus will make you rich!
How? Give Him your heart.

- **“Buy” White Clothes** → Jesus will cover your shame!
How? Practice compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience.

- **“Buy” Eye Ointment** → Jesus will give you sight (spiritual).
How? Invite Jesus into your life → Holy Spirit.

Remedy #2 to Feel the Zeal (v20): truly invite Jesus into your life!

*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door
I will go in and eat with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20*

Questions:

- Do you think going to church makes one a Christian?
- Are you a Christian by “family tradition?”
- Do you want heaven, but not Jesus?

Don't leave Jesus standing outside of your heart.
Sincerely open the door to your life and invite him in!

Blessing - right to sit with Jesus on His throne!

Healthy Church Series

Feel the Zeal

Revelation 3:14-22

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:14-22

Lukewarm

What it does **not** mean: Hot = fired up for Jesus; Cold = non-Christian

Both Hot and Cold are good, delightful to Jesus.

Lukewarm is not.

- Hierapolis therapeutic hot springs
 - Have you been in a hot spring? Jacuzzi, hot tub?
- Colossae- cold mountain spring water
- Laodicea, between the two, had blah, lukewarm water.

Some things are just not good when lukewarm

- **Story** - Puerto Rico. Snorkeling in tepid water. The most unfulfilling snorkeling in my life by far!
- At a good restaurant my son ordered a steak. We waited, and waited. It finally came, and we assumed the kitchen was really busy. But evidence showed that it obviously was forgotten on the serving shelf for a long time. How did we know that? The steak that was literally at room temperature. Blah.
- How about room temperature ice cream?
- You get how Jesus feels about lukewarm?

“Lukewarm” describes a person’s lack of spiritual zeal, enthusiasm.

- You might recall that Heart is one of our values – F.A.I.T.H.
- Halfhearted, going through the motions approach to Jesus.
- lacking excitement. Just go to church, do your thing, go home.

Lukewarm was *characteristic* of Laodicea.

I don’t think Jesus is talking about periodic decrease of spiritual zeal.

Periodic lull in spiritual zeal happens to everyone. I'm not saying it's okay, but it is not unusual. Paul:

- Romans 12:10-11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Lukewarm periods can happen because of:

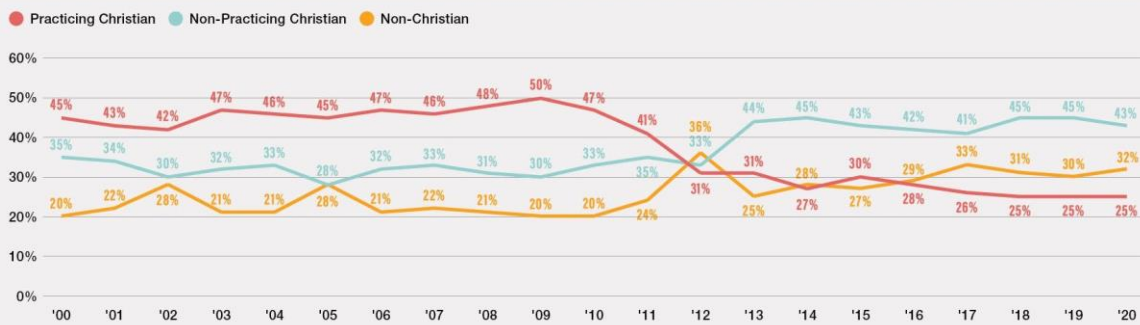
- **Circumstances** (ex. Covid, death of a loved one, God change dir.)
- **Dry Spells.** I think most people go through dry spells. If you are normally excited about Jesus, I wouldn't worry about dry spells. Maybe it just means you need to drink spiritual water at a retreat or sabbatical.

Laodicea, however, lukewarm was their character. **Lost their focus.**

- **Social-oriented churches** (like to get together)
 - Young man, hard nut, attracted to the church's video game ministry. Had no foundation.
 - Is anything wrong with social gatherings?
 - No. But it can't be our focus.
- **Tradition** (identify with Christianity and its practices)
 - Tradition is comfortable. Going through the motions.
 - Is there anything wrong with tradition?
 - No. But it can't be our focus.
- **Bandwagon** (everyone else is doing church)
 - Need to belong. Doing church because of others.
 - Is there anything wrong with needing to belong?
 - No. But it can't be our focus.
- **Self-Sufficient** (Laodicea)
 - Accomplishments, met goals, "arrived"
 - Is there anything wrong with aiming for and meeting goals?
 - No. But doing stuff on w/o Jesus can't be our focus.
 - "*Apart from me you can do nothing.*" (John 15:5)

HOW AMERICANS RELATE TO CHRISTIANITY IS CHANGING: 2000-2020

Barna STATE OF THE CHURCH



n = 96,171 U.S. adults | 2000-2020

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Hmmm – a follower of Christ who isn't following Christ? Oxymoron. Christian in label only.

Legend: Alexander the Great saw a soldier who was on guard duty, but the soldier was sleeping. “*What’s your name, son?*” “*Alexander, sir.*” “*Change your conduct, or change your name!*”

Going to spit you out, vomit you out.

- Jesus didn't say *feel* like vomiting you out. He said, *going* to.
- Vomit, spit you out. Lukewarm is repulsive to Jesus.

Fortunately, Jesus offers remedies so Laodicea can align themselves to Him. We will get to those remedies in just a bit, but before we do, I want to take a look at Jesus' **MOTIVE** for saying what he is about to say.

Vs. 19 - *Those I whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.*

(Hebrews 12:10-11, Proverbs 3:11)

LOVE!

The Father doesn't want us to be people who merely says they are His child, He wants them to really be His child!

So, out of love, Jesus offers ...

Remedies for Lukewarmness

Remedy #1 to Feel the Zeal (verse 18): "Buy" from Jesus three things:

Lots of metaphors! Metaphors need some fair interpretations. I'll do my best...

"**Buy**" is an exchange of things of value. You give Jesus something, He gives you something, something more valuable than you can imagine. For *emphasis* Jesus uses **three metaphors** to make the same point.

Jesus created and owns everything, so what can you possibly offer him to buy something from Him?

1. "Buy" Pure Gold → Jesus will make you rich!

- a. Pure gold stands for what is of **true value**.
- b. Your heart is something Jesus cannot take for himself.
- c. Your **Heart**.
store up your treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, your **heart** will also be. Matt 6:19-21
- d. *How can you give Him your heart?*
→ By making Jesus your highest devotion.
"Lord I give you my heart."
- e. Jesus cannot force your heart's devotion. You must give it.

2. "Buy" White Clothes → Jesus will clothe you!

- a. Not just clothed, but the best of covering of your shame.
- b. *How can you buy White clothes?*

→ Choose to live in a holy manner.

c. Die to your old shameful self and put on God's clothing:

d. *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves** with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Colossians 3:12*

e. This is something You must do.

3. **“Buy” Eye Ointment** → Jesus will give you sight (spiritual).

a. Salve, ointment. When you apply the ointment, it heals the eye condition so you can see rightly.

1. **Story**: - conjunctivitis. Red, itchy, rough. Difficulty reading, driving. Eye drops. → see clearly

b. *The man without the spirit does not accept the things that come from the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are **spiritually discerned**. 2 Corinthians 2:14*

c. Spiritual discernment comes from the **Holy Spirit**.

1. Be a **real** believer, invite Jesus Christ into your life!

2. When Jesus comes into your life → Spirit.

3. Salve, ointment, is the Holy Spirit.

4. Jesus cannot make you invite Him in. You must do it.

So there are things you must give to Jesus, things only you can give him.

In return, He gives remedy for Lukewarmness.

When you “buy” the things of the kingdom,

when you invest in the Kingdom,

Jesus will give you returns on your investment that are Supernatural:

- feel **rich** spiritually,
- your **shame** will be covered,
- you will have **spiritual** eyes.

The lack of the Holy Spirit is also the lack of Jesus, which leads us to the second Remedy...

Remedy #2 to Feel the Zeal: truly invite Jesus into your life!

Look at what Jesus says to Laodicea...

Rev 3:20 – Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will go in and eat with him, and he with me.

Laodicea is a church, yet Jesus is ***outside*** of the church's life. "*I'm here...outside, knocking, knocking, knocking. Invite me in. I want to fellowship with you!*"

With Jesus outside of their lives, were the Laodiceans actually believers in Jesus?

Unfortunately, some misunderstand what it means to be a Christian:

- **Some think that going to church makes one a Christian.**
 - But, as the Saying goes:
 - *Going to church does not make you a Christian any more than going into a garage makes you a car.*
- **Some think they are Christian by family tradition.** It's your background. That's not good enough.
- **Some don't actually care about Jesus, they just want to go to heaven.**

Maybe you wanted to go to heaven, but didn't necessarily want Jesus.

If you don't want Jesus today, what makes you think you will want to spend eternity with Him in heaven?

Do it today. Sincerely open the door to your life and invite him in.

The 2nd Remedy Jesus gives for Lukewarmness is:

Truly invite Jesus into your life.

If you truly invite Jesus into your life, He will change your life.

Over time your desires and heart grow more and more for Jesus,
and your zeal will be real. You will feel the zeal.

Blessing - right to sit with Jesus on His throne! WOW!

- If you're with Jesus, walking with Jesus, listening to Jesus (like Mary), following Jesus, you will follow him as He reigns on His throne!
- You will be with the one you follow:
 - If you follow Jesus, you will be in His presence.
 - If you don't want to follow Jesus you will follow self of Satan, and you will go where self and Satan go.
- We will say to God, "Your will be done" or God will say to us, "Your will be done."

If you are lukewarm

The time to decide is today. If you don't want to follow Jesus now, why would you want to go to His Heaven and dwell with Him forever?

Invitation