

Tom Edwards Evangelistic Assoc., Inc.

—a ministry of lay Catholic evangelization & mission—

Fifty years
of
Full time outreach

The

What's Your Temperature?



Let us begin with a spiritual self evaluation question. What is my “spiritual temperature” on a scale of 1 to 10? If the temperature reflects the degree of love, devotion, and service to God and if 9-10 represents hot and 1-2 is cold, what is my temperature?

Now read and hear these words of Jesus as recorded in Revelation 3:1-22. *The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the source of God’s creation, says this: (15) “I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. (16) So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. (17) For you say, ‘I am rich and affluent and have no need of anything,’ and yet do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18) I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich, and white garments to put on so that your shameful nakedness may not be exposed, and buy ointment to smear on your eyes so that you may see. (19) Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me”.*

The above passage perhaps contains one of the least liked and at the same time one of the most loved verses in the Bible. Compare verses 16 and 20. Both verses are directed toward Christians living a comfortable life style in the prosperous city of Laodicea, a city

famous for its fine textiles, a finance center and a medical school known for the eye salve called Phrygian ointment. The residents were known for their wealth and independent spirit. They were flush with gold. Their boast as stated in vs. 17, **“I am rich and affluent and have no need of anything”**. However the Lord Jesus who sees all declares that they are actually wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked. They without knowing were a people with desperate need and on the verge of catastrophic consequences. Their spiritual temperature is identified as “luke warm”, a condition vividly described as that which makes the Lord sick. Their self evaluation as a virtuous people had blinded them to their steady deterioration into hollow shells and a life lived as the walking dead. They had become as people partaking of recreational drugs, drink and pleasures which imperceptibly dragged them into a state of deception and decadence. As they spiraled downward, they lived under the illusion that they were well off and perceived themselves as acceptably righteous. Their minds had become anesthetized by the cultural clutter around them. They were suffering from the horrible condition of spiritual borderline anemia. Trying to sit on the fence, they were in danger of falling into the wrong side of eternity. Thinking themselves to be spiritual, their lives had become riddled with spiritual termites. Eroding in a pseudo spirituality, they had plummeted to the irreducible minimum, indifferent to the foundational truths of the faith and no longer willing to defend them.

Proclaiming

Feb.–March

2024

The great author, C. S. Lewis in his book The Screwtape Letters writes of the time when the devil was briefing his nephew, Wormwood, on the subtleties and techniques of tempting people. The goal, he counsels, is not wickedness but indifference. Satan cautions his nephew to keep the prospect comfortable at all cost. If he should become concerned about anything of importance, encourage him to think about his luncheon plans, and not to worry as it could induce indigestion. "I, the devil, will always see to it that there are bad people. Your job, my dear Wormwood, is to provide me with the people who do not care."

Consider the scriptural image of "lukewarmness". Do you know anyone who would walk into a restaurant and order a lukewarm cup of tea? Would you order a bowl of tepid soup? Neither has Jesus called for disciples who are indifferent, complacent, apathetic or satisfied with staying in the swamp of the Status Quo! We don't have to guess how such a spiritual condition makes Jesus feel. The answer glares at us. It's quite clear that it's enough to make He who is the Divine Healer sick,

Who can forget the television images of the big day that President Bush was attending a Japanese State Dinner. The President was suddenly hit by a violent disorder that caused him to throw up at the table. It is probably the most publicized upset stomach ever.

The scriptural image presented is that of one who would take a gulp of water and find it warm, stagnant and polluted resulting in an immediate rejection and purging of the stomach. Not good! The image expresses the utter abhorrence of God for disciples who lack zeal in faithful service and devotion to Him. He finds it nauseating.

The picture that is painted is similar to an Old Testament passage found in Leviticus 18:25-- "*And so the land has become defiled, and I have punished it for its wickedness, and the land has vomited out its inhabitants.*" What was it that those people were engaging in that called for such a judgement 3000 years ago? A few of the things in the context: killing their offspring, consulting mediums, spirit channelers, fortune tellers, astrologers (the age old new agers), cursing and disobeying parents, adultery and incest, and unnatural sex acts. What about our age today?

So what about the favorite verse in our selected passage. *Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. (20) "Behold, I stand*

at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me." The stern rebuke is birthed from the heart of He who is absolute love personified. It is the cry of God's heart to a people he cherishes, a call to wake up, change your ways, return to your first love. The Lord has offered them His authentic gifts to replace those false and fading substitutes for true happiness. He offers them "pure gold refined by fire". Don't buy into the glitz of the present world which will fade away. Don't receive the precious seed of the Word of God into your souls and then allow thorns to choke it out, those thorns being the worries of life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the inordinate desire for other things. Those other things of this world are deceptive and cause one to cave in on self, worship the unholy trinity of me, myself and I.

Jesus says to a people living in their textile rich city and fashionable culture, "**Buy from me white garments in which to be clothed**". He is alluding to the garments of righteousness which only He can offer, a royal garment that allows access to the King of Kings. Remain clothed!

A story is told of Abe Lincoln as he was walking into town. He stopped a man in a wagon and asked, "Would you have the goodness to take my overcoat into town for me?" The man answered, "Sure, but how will you get it again?" "Oh, very easily" Abe replied. "I intend to remain in it". So also are we called to "put on Christ" and remain in Him! As we trust and yield to Him, we are carried to our destination. Don't be caught wearing the fig leaves of false security.

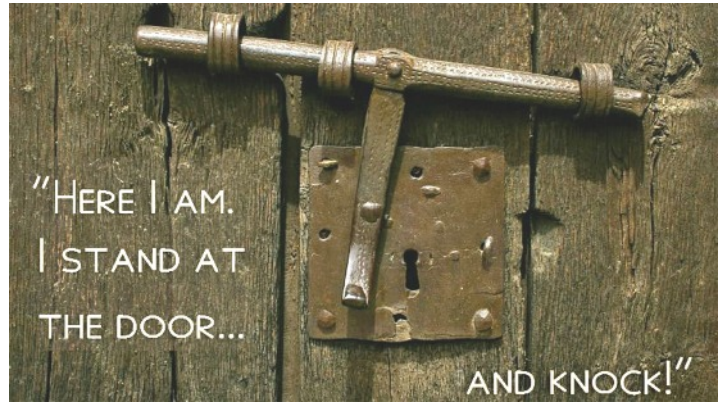
Jesus offers the heavenly eye salve, an ointment with which one's eyes are opened and illumination is given to see beyond the temporal and focus on the eternal. Such is the work of the Holy Spirit; "*What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him, this God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God (I Cor. 2:9-10).*"

Then comes the knock at the door. Most everyone has heard it. It can be acknowledged or ignored. It may be a faint tapping: it may be a resounding pounding. One always has a chance to open the door or keep it locked. Perhaps there are those who hear Jesus



knocking right now as you read this brief article. The Lord can make Himself known in a multitude of ways.

To those who are willing to open the door there is promised the most intimate type of communion. The Lord will accept the invitation, come in and dwell in the kind of fellowship that we experience when dining with our closest of friends. More than that he says, “*I will give the victor the right to sit with me on my throne, as I myself first won the victory and sit with my Father on his throne.*” That believer will partake of a victory that involves the life and soul being continuously energized by the Spirit. That will be the soul which experientially knows true joy, peace, faith and courage to stand against the raging currents of adversity. That will be a life ignited with flames of holy fervor. This goes beyond fleshly energy and busyness according to will power. This is not a fire that momentarily flashes but then dies because it has consumed its own resources. Rather, this is a “burning-bush” not consumed but feeding on the ever fresh breath of the Spirit. This is the ultimate renewable



resource that produces an ardor that is healthy, balanced, communicable and effective. Out of this relationship flows a zeal that is transforming and constructive. It is a life that can be read like a living epistle that proclaims the essence of the gospel message. As we make our way through our Lenten pilgrimage this year, let's be mindful to ask ourselves each day a very piercing and poignant question:

What is my temperature?



Tom shares at the 2024 Holy Spirit Healing Conference, Gainesville, FL

Making it Personal

by Jean Marie



When I read the draft of this Proclaimer and Tom told me he left a lot of room for me to write something, I had a very lukewarm response in me. He did an excellent job of covering it and I had nothing more to add. It seemed to me anything I would say would come across as “blah blah blah”

to me and the reader. And that kind of worried me. How could I write something about our Lord that would be so boring? Am I lukewarm? Maybe I'm just misunderstanding what lukewarm means. So, I looked it up. Some synonyms for lukewarm are halfhearted, unexcited, indifferent, apathetic, uninterested and unenthusiastic. At first glance, I was relieved. I love Jesus. I love the Father and I love the Holy Spirit. That's not me. But then some of those words wouldn't leave me alone. And I had to finally admit there are times when those words do describe me. Now, reading that scripture again not only scares me but it hurts my heart. It's not how I want to be. When I think about what Jesus did for me, what the Father gave for me, and what the Holy Spirit does for me every day, there is no way I am lukewarm. But on those days when I just “know” it without the awareness of the depth of that Love, I can become lukewarm; something I never thought I could be.

It's Lent and I know now what I am to work on. Maybe, you do to. Let's pray for each other that we recognize when we slip into lukewarmness that we remember His love for us and quickly turn our full hearts back to Him. Lord, we wouldn't want any of those words to describe how we feel about someone we love, especially You. So, help us, Lord, to love You with all our heart, all our soul, and all our being. To listen to your Word and live our lives fully for You.

Mission Itinerary

Lenten Parish Missions: Contact Parishes for specific details

FEB. 25, 26, 27, 28, 2024—Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Blanding Blvd., Jacksonville, FL

MARCH 11, 12, 13—Corpus Christi Catholic Church, St. Augustine, FL

MARCH 17, 18, 19—Holy Cross Catholic Church, St. Petersburg, FL

OTHER EVENTS:

APRIL 13, 2024—Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL—Womens “Renewal in the Spirit” retreat.

MAY 17, 18, 19—Clearwater, FL—Our Lady of Divine Providence School of Spirituality—”Spiritual Gifts”

JULY 9-25—Tanzania, East Africa—Renewal Ministries Mission —Rallies, Workshops, Pro-Life, Youth, and more. (Contact us if interested in being a team member).



*Tom & Jean Marie
Edwards*

DONATE



Joyful Family Prayer Group

Join us for Praise & Worship, Intercessory Prayer, Scripture Study and Fellowship. Monday nights, 7:00 PM, House of Prayer, 30 Ocean Ave., St. Augustine, FL 32080 (adjacent to the National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche at Mission of Nombre De Dios). We will also Zoom the meeting on select dates. Let us know if you would like to receive the link via your email. Send request to goyetomedwards@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

Would you please prayerfully consider a regular commitment of spiritual and financial support by becoming a Co-Missionary with us. We will keep you updated in our special quarterly letter to all Co-Missionaries. We also send a supply of addressed return envelopes as per your need. We can also receive your support via most credit cards using the Paypal link or Zelle (904-315-8634). Go to <https://goyetomedwards.wixsite.com/parishmission>. There you can make a tax deductible gift on a one time basis or as a reoccurring amount according to your desire. Donations of stock can be made through our brokerage account. Contact us for specifics.

Or, use the enclosed envelope. Please include your prayer request. We personally read each one and pray for every need as we join our hearts with yours.

YOUTUBE VIDEO

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxxyVoj-mYVu3_PrXzZ7R1Q

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