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*“So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”*  
*Revelation 3:16*

Dear Friends in Christ,

When I was 17 years old, after giving my life and all of my present and future to Jesus Christ, accepting Him as both my Lord and Savior, I began in earnest to read and memorize Scripture. It was a big part of South Hills Young Life as well as Mt. Lebanon Presbyterian’s legacy—to teach Scripture to young people and encourage them to recite it by heart. One of the first ones I memorized was John 3:16—a classic. What I do not remember memorizing at that time was *Revelation 3:16*! There was probably a reason for that. Perhaps it is because a fledgling Christian needed to mature in the foundations of the faith before understanding Jesus’ warning and exhortation. A warning to not lose one’s passion for Christ, and an exhortation to fight the good fight, to press on, and to persevere to the end.

We often conjure up ideas of a genteel Jesus. A respectable, refined, and mild-mannered messiah. Certainly Jesus was gentle, meek, kind, gracious, merciful, patient, and forgiving. But Jesus was much more than that. He was also straightforward, honest, truthful, strong, level-headed, reasonable, and when necessary, blunt.

In the passages we will be studying this Sunday, both the historical and practical elements of the sermon will focus on Jesus’ message to the Church of Laodicea. And what a message it is! Jesus points out all of the things that the people of the Church of Laodicea think make them special, unique, a cut above the rest, and outstanding in their identity and mission—and then Jesus systematically dismantles them. Therefore, the Church of Laodicea and the Church of today (including each local church) are faced not only with Jesus’ warning, but also with Jesus’ advice. And that advice involves going to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ alone for their righteousness. And for their purity, identity, purpose, and calling. Their complacency can end whenever they (and we) decide that we are not the masters of our own destiny, that we are subject to the rule and reign of Jesus in our lives, and that we live in service to God and others, *as defined by God* and not us.

Please join us this Sunday as we dive into our Scripture passage in Revelation, and as we seek the mind of Christ in our church, community, and world.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Steve