

Our Lord's Warning Agt. Lukewarmness.

Rev. iii, 16.

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Our Lord's Warning Against Lukewarmness

Revelation iii, 16: "To thee, because  
thou art lukewarm,  
and neither cold nor hot, I will  
spue thee out of my mouth."

When a man sets out for the first time as a hunter, if he has a gentle heart, he is likely to be called to a very unwelcome halt after his first successful shot... ~~while~~... later it would not matter so much; but when for the first time he must witness the same, to ~~for~~ see those appealing eyes of the dumb brute which cannot use man's language, saying to him: "Why do you kill me?" there is nothing for it, he must stop & answer to his heart for the charge.

It is somewhat thus ~~between~~ that the Bible treats us. Here we are in its presence, in ~~the~~ its own proper place, like the

3  
stricken deer in the forest; like  
it, the book has no human lungs,  
bore its words heart; but here  
it lies, saying to us: "Are you right,  
~~in your spirit~~ are you just? Stop  
& answer."

And, dear friends,  
there is a very solemn likeness in  
the simile I have chosen; the  
animal appeals, & is silent; the  
Bible can be neglected, if we  
choose to refuse it our attention.  
But it is an infinitely solemn ques-  
tion that it puts to our consci-  
ences: "Are you just, in the sight  
of God?"

Now our text of this morning  
is one that asks of us that ques-  
tion. I grant you it is as un-  
pleasant, where to stop & meet it

before we can go on with our reli-<sup>4</sup>  
gious life; as the ~~appo~~ unseasonable  
appeal to the hunter's heart. But has  
not the Lamb of God been stricken?  
Are not His holy hands, that never did  
man ill, pierced this very moment,  
with the marks of cruel ~~sins~~? Of He,  
meek, & loving, & of infinite grace,  
deems it right to ask you to stop  
& anoint Him from your heart, has  
He not ~~the right~~ as much claim as  
a bleeding, dying creature?

He speaks the words of our text.  
"These things" (verse 14) "saith the Amen,  
the faithful & competent Witness, the  
Originator" (v. bel. i, 18, as per large, in loc.)  
of the creation of God". O what my-  
esty does He, the Lamb of God, see  
while He would persuade us bright-  
ness, & to confess our sins!

~~He addresses us all, that none whose~~  
~~consciences~~

God, Who did you being free,  
Made you with himself alive,  
He the fatal cause demands,  
Asks the work of His own hands.  
B. Wesley (492).

He addresses us all, that none whose  
consciences say that they are ~~the~~  
described, may fail to see their evil  
condition now in the (Luke xix, 42)  
day of their opportunity: "He that  
hath an ear, let him hear" [or hearken].  
"What the Spirit saith unto the churches."  
So we are all to regard our ~~own~~ ~~part~~, of  
which these words ~~above~~ are the ap-  
plication; & consider the ~~subject~~  
offense of lukewarmness, whether  
God does not behold it in us.

The text speaks of lukewarmness,  
indifference, in religion; a ~~thing~~ <sup>sin</sup>

we should suppose might be found in rejecters of the Gospel, but not actually in the Church of Christ. But no, here it is in the Church, the Lord himself says: "To the ~~the church~~ angel" (that is the pastor) "of the church of the Laodiceans write, because thou art lukewarm!"

The Divine Head of the Church writes message: to seven <sup>particular</sup> churches, & ~~here one is~~ through their ministers, <sup>"teach them to what the Spirit saith unto the churches";</sup> & here one is described as filled with the sin of lukewarmness! He has not a word of commendation to that church! And yet He evidently means to show us that the church at Laodicea was a type of a great many professed Christians in all churches; for, He says: "He that hath an ear let him hear this too." My brethren

7 - ren in this church! will you by  
your Savior's name, & let them fear  
by your conscience I awaken a spirit  
of repentance if need be, while I  
talk to you from these things  
of

## Our Savior's Warning against lukewarmness

### I

~~The message is first, practically  
a definition of lukewarmness. For  
for to the church. & which the Lord  
says: "I know thy works, that thou  
art neither cold nor hot". & "thou art  
lukewarm"; he says: "Thou knowest  
not that thou art wretched, & miser-  
able, & poor, & blind, & naked."  
Here then are six characteristics  
of a lukewarm Christian. And  
the first is self-deception.~~

1. The lukewarm thinks correct



I

The lukewarm Christian is one who is neither cold nor hot; that is to say, one who professes, appears, & he a ~~not~~ faithful servant of Christ, but who is yet in the bondage of iniquity. Bunyan has imagined, <sup>by</sup> the conception from, a man, Mr. Facing-both-ways, a founder of the town of Fair-speech; where the people differ ~~from~~ in religion from those of the stricter sort, in that they never strive against mind & tide, & that they are always most <sup>zealous</sup> ~~zealous~~ when reli-

... goes in his silver slippers;  
... ving much to walk with him in  
... the street, of the own olives, & the  
... eople applaud him." (Old ed., p. 112.)

1. Now our Lord remarks first of  
... uch Christians, that they are self-  
deceived. ~~The Lukewarm thinks~~  
He says: "Thou knowest  
not that thou art wretched, & miser-  
... ble, & poor, & blind, & naked." The  
Lukewarm thinks

that ~~he~~ is "rich", & increased with 8  
food, & have need of nothing! By riches,  
he means salvation, a holy life ~~joined~~  
with God. He not only thinks he has  
this, but he says so. "Because thou say-  
est!" This does not <sup>merely</sup> mean: "Because thou  
makest a profession of religion." It is a  
good, a commanded thing to "confess  
with thy mouth that Jesus is the Christ,"  
when one sincerely & truly believes. But  
this <sup>text</sup> means that the lukewarm Chris-  
tian makes a false profession; that he  
says speaks with ~~the~~ assumed warmth  
as a Christian, while his heart is as cold  
as an infidel's.

Our Lord says that the lukewarm  
does not know this. He is self-de-  
ceived by his false fervor. For instance,  
there are some whose hearts are ~~indif-~~  
~~ferent to the~~ never thrill, whose eyes  
never moisten, whose sweet strains of

9 praise in a hymn, or the comforting assurance of David's psalms; who are ~~never~~ <sup>never</sup> in prayer for some ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> impatient sinner; who never feel an anguish at the trials of their fellow-~~men~~; whose zeal for all controversies of their denomination, whose pride in "our church", whose enthusiastic utterances in times of <sup>general religious</sup> ~~deep~~ interest, ~~in the~~ present an appearance of warmth & sincerity that it deceives their own hearts. They really believe themselves rich in spiritual things; ~~but~~ ~~their hearts are not right toward~~ ~~God~~ they do verily think that the objects they labor for are the dearest of all to the mind of ~~God~~.

Others who are lukewarm — for there are many varieties of this false spirit — others appear to have a devout love for Christ,

but without a due reverence for  
Him. They love to ignore, or gainsay,  
the Divine attribute of justice; to limit  
the rewards that God gives, to this  
world, & to cultivate, in consequence,  
a course of life which they know  
could not stand the rebuke of a  
sterner doctrine. They are neither hot  
nor cold; they say they believe in God's  
almighty, but they will not allow  
Him to be our absolute, supreme ma-  
ster; & yet, ~~they succeed~~ alas! they  
persuade their hearts that a senti-  
ment toward the Divine Son is pure  
religion enough to answer with God.

So we see the Lukewarm as self-de-  
ceived. O what a waking there will  
be when God shall give his reward!  
It is the just love of Christ, that  
would dispel the delusion now.  
As many as He loves, He rebukes &

11 chastens, that they may be zealous  
now & repent.

2. But again: our Lord Jesus in  
most touchingly describes the condi-  
tion, the real condition, of the  
lukewarm, as he is able & disposed  
to reveal it to them. And first he  
~~tells~~ declares that they are wretched  
& miserable; fit objects for pity, with  
all their fancied riches.

The lukewarm man is at such  
pains to keep up his mistaken profes-  
sions, that he cannot, like the infi-  
del, or the heathen, turn comfortably  
to the pleasures of sin. However ~~large~~  
small a portion of the sun of high-  
tenness he suffers himself to see,  
it is too much to enable him to  
take real comfort in anything else.

And so he may, for example, <sup>12</sup>  
be able to persuade himself that  
some duty or other requires the  
absence which his cold heart chooses,  
from the assembling together of the  
Christians; but he cannot find the  
same complacency in something else,  
equally innocent in itself, which is  
~~an~~ acknowledged ~~self~~ a mere  
pleasure. And on the other hand,  
he does not enjoy religion in itself.  
It is rather as a means to the unde-  
niable selfish end of ~~biting~~ cajoling  
his Maker into giving him salva-  
tion, that he likes religion; tho' he  
would not own this, even to him-  
self, & has, probably, never realized  
it: "thou knowest not." Poor soul!  
his safety seems almost to lie in  
his ignorance, doesn't it?

13  
What a wretched existence ~~then~~,  
is his! Is it not like poor Tantalus  
fold up his chin in water, yet tan-  
talized by unquenchable thirst: sur-  
rounded by a world full of the very  
things his heart yearns for; O how  
does that poor wicked heart thrill  
~~to the~~ ~~man~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ calls of the  
world, the flesh, or the devil, that  
never thrills to the sound of prayer  
or ~~the~~ ~~truth~~. To holy, glorious truth.  
Is he not ~~the~~ ~~pitied~~? Not worthy  
of pity, I don't suppose the text means  
exactly that; poor sinner, he is wor-  
thy of nothing but rebuke, as his Lord  
gives in the text; but calculated to  
call out pity of One Who under-  
stands his condition thoroughly?  
But devils will not pity him, they



14  
naut him, & are more torn with  
fear of losing him, than pity which  
they do not know. Men will hardly  
pity him; those like him are too  
busy with their own kindred wretched-  
ness; the bad hate him for his par-  
tial aversion from them, & the good,  
also! "there is none good but One,  
that is God." He pities him; He has  
sent this message to him.

3. Again: our Lord says the Luke-  
vain man is poor. If you interpret  
the ~~idea above~~... thou sayest that thou  
art rich; to refer to ~~temporal~~ a satis-  
faction in temporal riches & an indif-  
ference to <sup>the</sup> spiritual, then you under-  
stand the Master as saying here  
that he who considers himself rich  
because of them, is deceived & in want  
of all true riches. But I do not so  
interpret the ~~thought~~ passage; for

While the Lukewarm undoubtedly  
may, as one of the many evil results  
of their lukewarmness, love earthly  
riches overwhelmingly, still they are  
lukewarm; not whole infidels; really  
knowing too much about <sup>eternal</sup> values  
to fail to desire in their evil  
fashion, eternal rather than <sup>sole</sup> temporal  
good. They want both, while they love  
the latter best. There are plenty of professed Christians  
in worldly goods, who are nevertheless lukewarm

But our Savior plainly says —  
whatever their wish, whatever their  
self-delusion — that they are poor.

~~Anything spiritual they have not.~~

Spiritual knowledge, to some <sup>point</sup> degree,  
they have — enough to know that  
Heaven is mysteriously desirable; but  
spirituality, a character consistent  
with Heaven, they have not. They are  
without grace — save so far as grace  
is given them in this attention of  
the Lord Jesus. God has not breathed

into their souls the breath of life. 16  
If they are "not far from the Kingdom  
of God" — & even that cannot be said of  
them as it was of the noble-hearted  
intelligent young man — they are  
content to remain there: like the poor  
one often sees in cities, preferring to hang  
around the doors of the rich, to  
taking the laborious way to have a  
wealth & a name for themselves.

Poor! "I went by the field of the sloth-  
ful, & by the vineyard of the man void of  
understanding. And lo! it was all grown  
over with thorns, & nettles had covered the  
face thereof, & the stone wall thereof was  
broken down." (Prov. xxiv, ad fin.) Is not  
such a farmer poor, most miserably  
poor? What if he has a foothold —  
the underarm a ~~possession~~ form of  
sustenance? It is not improved; there  
is no life about it: it will die, presently.

17  
4. But once more: the Lord, the  
light of the world, tells the Lukewarms  
that ~~they are~~ blind. They do not  
perceive the truth.

<sup>and page</sup>  
The blind go about in the same  
world that we do. They walk, they  
talk, they use the materials that we  
do; their life is, for great part, the  
same with ours; they are men & wo-  
men in the world, as we are. But  
they are blind. To a certain extent,  
they are embarrassed, & impoverished  
by their blindness; but ah! that is  
not the bitterness, the agony of it:  
it is that a whole sense is dead, &  
all the joys which come to the mind  
thro' that are shut off; heard  
about, wondered over, but never en-  
joyed, never understood. And it seems  
worse at least — & sometimes to them  
— like a living death.

to the lukewarm, doublehearted  
Christian ~~sufferer~~ is blind. He does  
not know it; but is his lot any the  
less pitiable for that? ~~He cannot see~~  
~~truth, cannot enjoy it, cannot regard~~  
~~it.~~ This blindness ~~is~~ is curable;  
but the remedy is severe. It is related  
of a king's daughter, <sup>born blind,</sup> that she was  
cured of blindness by having this  
singular treatment. She was kept  
in ignorance that she lacked ~~the~~  
one sense, until the time ~~for~~ when  
it was possible to perform the  
operation arrived. Then it was neces-  
sary that ~~her~~ <sup>an</sup> eager <sup>for sight, on her part,</sup> wish should be  
called into existence, that her will  
might aid the physician; & so the  
princess was given sight. ~~Had it~~  
not <sup>have been</sup> doubly an evil, then, if she  
could not have been convinced of  
her need? The indifferent farmer

is hardest of all to reach; "I will  
throw next either cold or hot," says  
the Savior. "Let me alone," replies the  
indifferent lukewarm one; "I am in  
need of nothing." Oh! to think that the  
world of truth is shining bright &  
glorious into many a poor sinner's  
heart that the cold Christian has long  
despised, while yet darkness reigns in  
the place where first of all it should  
have been found! If the lukewarm  
fails to come to the light, because his  
deeds are darkness, the great opportunity  
for cure will pass by, & he will  
be cast out into outer darkness;  
there shall be weeping & gnashing  
of teeth.

~~To what are the lukewarm Chris-  
tians blind?~~

~~To the light that enters by the window  
of the heart. He does not see, in mass of~~

He cannot forget this vain world of  
 appearances long enough to contents  
 plate a world of spirits built on the  
 truth, <sup>But the great affliction 'may & does see, by faith</sup>  
 a world of people ~~who~~ <sup>are</sup> sinful  
 indeed, at first, but granted pardon  
 & declared just by reason of the  
 once debtors to

justice, but pardoned by a self-sacrificing  
 — not justice-sacrificing love;  
 brought into the most intimate re-  
 lations with the revived Person

Who <sup>loving</sup> <sup>justice</sup> <sup>claiming</sup> <sup>after it has been</sup> <sup>in their eyes;</sup>  
 addressed himself to them <sup>pre-</sup>  
 by His dying for them; <sup>hamed,</sup>  
 schooled by the vicissitudes of this  
 world, ~~under the constant light of the most & highest of~~  
~~for a mighty existence~~ under

the constant guidance of a book  
 of <sup>direction</sup>  
 an invisible Counselor, for a  
 mighty existence in a vast sphere  
 where all that was learned, en-  
 joyed, endured here shall be put

to use; entering one by one, thro' the  
 beautiful mystery of Death, upon that  
 Existence, to find that it is in the  
 very midst of that great court  
 where are unveiled all the secrets  
 of Time; nay, to find that life  
 to be in the <sup>independent</sup> society of Jehovah  
 the Lord himself, a royal life, a  
 glorious life, an eternal life.



Christ's that he reads, that they are so  
for him; he does not want them, as if  
his eyes did not look at them, & he does  
not see them. Another Christian is mourn-  
ing over sin in helpless acknowledgment  
to God, & sees that Christ ever liveth  
to make intercession for him;  
he feels himself rejoiced to find  
he is rejoicing to find God's grace in  
his heart overcoming sin, & he  
sees that it is for him that the  
Lord of glory says: "To him that  
overcometh will I grant to sit with  
me in my throne, even as I also  
overcame & am set down with  
my Father in his throne."

He does not see, the Lutheran one,  
wretched hypocrite, the marvellous beauty

5. Finally then, the Lutheran indif-  
ferent Christian stands naked before  
God. However orthodox he may be;

21 however well-informed on the great truths of scripture; however zealous; or however well-reputed among his fellows he may be, on account of natural gifts that are pleasing, or the rewards of industry: he is naked, for he is without a righteousness. ~~He may be as good~~ in his actions, merely, as the most thorough Christian; he is not only matched in the struggle he has to keep up ~~to~~ in order to show a freedom; not only poor in vital piety; not only blind to the truth & to his own condition; his worst respect is this, that he cannot stand before God one instant. ~~He has not~~

Every true Christian is a sinner-saved by Grace. The Son of God has taken human form & ~~borne~~ <sup>suffered</sup> the death of

the cross, in order to satisfy jus- 22  
tice by a victim, & so save us sin-  
ners. Ha. He no right to make terms,  
after that <sup>He bids believers in Him take of his,</sup> ~~that~~ he has said that he  
will save <sup>upon them, & learn of Him.</sup> those who come to God  
by Him. Not who come to church  
merely; nor to communion-services only;  
nor to any half-hearted obedience  
to the well-known ~~will~~ <sup>with</sup> Divine will;  
but to God, <sup>whom he presents, elaps in His righteousness, & love,</sup> The liberal man  
does not come to God. He seems to  
come, he professes to come, he trembles  
to think that he does not come. But  
he does not take the yoke of Jesus  
on himself, & learn of Him; he does  
not bring forth fruits meet for repent-  
ance; he does not wholly repent. And  
so he does not receive, by faith, the  
Gift of God, he does not receive the igh-  
tiousness of X<sup>c</sup>. There he stands ex-  
posed: exposed to the temptations

which God's people can resist; to  
the ~~laughter~~ scorn of the meek,  
whose strength is firm; to the rebuke  
or bewailing of Christians; to the  
abhorrence of angels; to the ~~rejection~~ rejection  
by God. He is mangled & mis-  
erable, & poor, & blind, & naked,

## II

But ~~this~~ in all this shame & misery,  
the professions, the hopes, the demands  
of the lukewarm Christian are such  
as to most deeply offend his Lord. He  
says he is rich, & increased with food, &  
in need of nothing; he has no heart  
for exercising vital piety; he is neither  
cold nor hot; & <sup>bright</sup> ~~is~~ is incensed. To  
him alone of all the classes of Chris-  
tians mentioned in these seven epistles  
to the churches is denounced in ad-  
vanced the unrestricted wrath of the Lamb.



25 nature X<sup>n</sup> & a hypocrite. Repent-  
ance, or its final neglect, will expose  
its low, & to the universe; Christ  
says if it is not shown He will  
reject the man.

Paul now,  
while yet it is God's ordinance to  
love him, ~~and~~ naked thro' he is of  
righteousness, in the Church, he ignorant  
of his true condition, self-deceived &  
it may be deceiving others, he can-  
not be trusted, save with just enough  
dofford the proof of his character.

The <sup>servant</sup> ~~man~~ who wrapped his <sup>master's</sup> pound in  
a napkin, who buried the talent in-  
trusted him in the earth, <sup>one who has been</sup> ~~instruc-~~  
ed with but one pound, one talent.  
~~then would not do that.~~

So what a poor ~~but only~~ <sup>& of a judge.</sup> ~~all business~~ as  
he is, can safely allow the doubtful,

~~bookworm~~ ~~with~~ ~~a~~ ~~great~~ ~~book~~ 26  
~~little, he gives him~~  
a few little stock of truths — of  
experiences — of spiritual activities —  
he has! Men can almost see his  
nakedness of soul, or quite, thro' the  
threadbare covering of a few formal  
prayers, a few ~~of~~ ceremonious actions,  
a half churchly - half worldly zeal.  
So God treats him now; the ~~per-~~  
fect among the Christians, distrusted  
evidently by his Lord.

2. But lastly, Christ will eject  
him. When the end comes; when his  
spirit can be perceived just as plain  
as now we can hear his professions  
— the Lord the Judge says: "I will  
speak thee out of My mouth." He will  
visit the father angels, & Lord Lord sin-  
ners, with the fiery wrath of his indig-

27 - nation : to the Gentile, Laodicean  
Christian he reserves a contempt. He  
will spurn him from his presence, into  
the common hell of all God's enemies  
he must go, but as the basest of them  
all. Let us not dwell on so ~~low~~  
vile a conclusion, but fear, lest,  
a promise being left us of entering  
into Christ's Kingdom, we shall  
come short of it in this fashion.