

This Issue Plaguing the Church Is Why America Is in Serious Trouble

I know it's considered a generalization to pin one issue on an entire nation, but America, we need to talk.

I understand that it's natural for our lives to follow a pattern, a daily, weekly and monthly routine that cycles over and over again. That's fine. Really, it's not this routine that I take issue with. But it seems to me that we in the American church have allowed our objectively neutral routines to create in our lives a spiritually fatal case of complacency. With the midterm elections approaching next week, we are being offered an incredible opportunity to break from the rut of our comfortable lives and take godly action. It's time for us to get up, get out and take part in what God is calling the church to do in this crucial, unprecedented season. The fate of our country and our hearts depends on it.

The Word I see in the Bible that is most closely related to complacency is lukewarmness. In Revelation 3:15–16, God brings some of his strongest remarks against the church: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of My mouth.” Though these words were directed at the church at Laodicea, they could just as easily apply to the American church today.

We are living in troubling times, yet many people seem to ignore the signs. Complacent in their faith, they reassure themselves that the economy is better, unemployment is better, it would seem that the right judges are being appointed to the Supreme Court and so on. And yet, there are pipe bombs being sent to political figures. There are hurting people on our

southern borders trying to enter our nation illegally. There are children committing murder against other children. There are people right now who may be going to hell tomorrow. And all of this is happening while we go about our business, far enough removed from any of these circumstances and situations that we are able to ignore their existence and remain lukewarm about these problems and their solutions.

Let us look closer at the two words Jesus used in Revelation to define lukewarm. He said that because the Laodiceans were "neither cold nor hot" (v. 16), they were sickening to Him. Many people have interpreted this as saying that God wants us either hot, on fire and saved, or cold, lost and on our way to hell. But that is not true. God never wants people to be lost and on their way to hell. That is the reason He gave His only begotten Son to die on the cross.

Hot to God means being ready and prepared for whatever the devil, the forces of darkness, temptation and the spirit of Jezebel brings our way. Cold, on the other hand, means you are in a season of preparation while you await your orders. Cold things are prepared for the future. The best way that I know how to explain this is with the example of fresh frozen vegetables. Their nutrients are preserved, and they are waiting for the best moment to be used properly to release their healthful benefits. Both food that is very hot and food that is in a frozen state is exactly as it should be. On the other hand, hot food or drink that is lukewarm is unappetizing, and cold food that has become room temperature is spoiled and possibly inedible. On top of that, lukewarmness is the best temperature to breed disease.

People who live a life of lukewarmness are neither ready for what they will confront today nor prepared for what is coming tomorrow. The temperature of their lives has changed so slowly that are often not even aware of the state or condition that they are really in. In many cases, they don't even realize they have become spoiled, so they continue to live complacent,

comfortable lives, never correcting the problem—and never making any impact for the kingdom of God.

In fact, complacency often wears the Halloween mask of faithfulness. When people ask, “What are you doing for God?” we must not answer, “Oh, I don’t know what you mean, but I’m faithful”

When people ask, “Have you witnessed to someone?” we must not answer, “No, but I’m faithful.”

When people ask, “Do you tithe?” we must not say, “No, but I’m faithful.”

See, faithful means “full of faith,” and not only that, but unwavering and active faith. The church cannot be truly faithful and truthfully complacent at the same time. It is not possible.

God is the only answer. In order to let Him move powerfully in our lives, hearts, and nation, there are some steps we need to take. First of all, we must stir up our fire. Paul wrote to Timothy, “Stir up the gift of God, which is in you ... For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control” (2 Tim. 1:6-7). When the fire of God gets low in your life, you must be the one to get out the poker of God’s Word and begin to stir up the fire.

Second, we must fill up with fresh fuel. The fire of God is always there; it never goes out entirely. But just as we must stir up our fire, we must give it new fuel to ignite in our lives and keep the flames burning.

Finally, we must not forget as we stir up and fill up our hearts that we have to develop an attitude that we’re fed up. We must become so fed up that we can no longer tolerate complacency. We must stop ignoring current events and instead choose to see how complacency destroys our nation, our churches and our families. We must understand how it destroys

us. When we are faced with an opportunity to make a difference, we must take it.

This week, when people in church ask, "Are you going to vote?" we must not reply, "No, but I am here." Being here and being in a routine and a rut does not mean you are faithful, nor does action for the sake of action make you on fire for God.

Ask God today for His fire to burn hot within your heart and be prepared for what God is doing. He is putting new wine in new wineskins.

- He has given us His Holy Spirit to release healing to our nation and everyone who seeks His love.
- He has given us His Holy Spirit to birth supernatural transformation through prayer.
- He has given us His Holy Spirit for a worldwide revival that will bring millions into the kingdom of God.
- He has given us the precious gift of the His Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus' love and grace in everything that we experience.
- He is getting ready to come back for His glorious bride.

Are you ready?

You're beautiful. I see Jesus in you.

Have an awesome week! {eoa}

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citywide soul-winning celebrations. Mikel considers it an honor to assist in conducting the annual pastor's conference, where thousands of pastors from Russia's 11 time zones come for training, teaching and equipping. Mikel and his wife, Marsha, reside in Tulsa, Oklahoma.