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## **CRAZY LOVE - - - Part 2**

(I am quoting extensively from Francis Chan's book, Crazy Love, and adding in some quotes from others as well as my thoughts.)

Last month I asked, "Why are we such lukewarm Christians?" and answered that we have a mistaken view of God - - that we think of God as a kind Being who is satisfied when people manage to fit Him into their lives in some small way, but that this was never the view of God presented by the Bible and certainly not by Jesus.

### **ARE YOU ON FIRE FOR GOD, OR ARE YOU LUKEWARM?**

Francis Chan describes lukewarm people as follows, and this list is greatly reduced:

- Lukewarm people attend church fairly regularly. They believe that is what "good Christians" do, and they enjoy the services, which are uplifting.

But the Lord says, *These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is only rules taught by men.* (Isa. 29:13)

- Lukewarm people give money to the church and to charity.....as long as it doesn't impinge on their standard of living. If they have a little extra and it's safe to give, they do so. Never in their lives has their giving been a real sacrifice. They never consider that the money they spend on luxuries could mean the difference between life or death for many people.

But the Lord says, *The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith...*(1 Tim 6) *Now listen, you rich people* (everyone who receives this mailing is a rich person compared to the majority of people in the world), *weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you.....You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence.* (James 5) (Note: I certainly know many Christians who live generous, sacrificial lives. But the average Christian in America in an evangelical, Bible believing church gives only 2.5% of their income to the cause of Christ and to the needy. That is giving a little tip from your surplus to poor old God.)

- Lukewarm people tend to choose what is popular over what is right in times of conflict. They want to fit in both at church and outside of church.

But the Lord says, *Woe to you when all men speak well*

*of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.* (Luke 6:26) *Everything they do is done for men to see.* (Matt. 23:5)

- Lukewarm people don't really hate sin and want to be saved from their sin; they just don't want to be punished for their sin or to be exposed to their family and friends. Sometimes they feel suffocated by the rules of the Christian life and wish they were free to do what they really want to do.

But the Lord says, *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.* (John 10:10) *What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?* (Rom. 6:1-2)

- Lukewarm people rarely share their faith with their neighbors, coworkers, or friends. They don't want to make people uncomfortable by talking about religion, and they don't want to be seen as a religious fanatic.

But the Lord says, *Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.* (Matt. 10:32)

- Lukewarm people say they love Jesus, and He is a part of their lives. But only a part. They give Him a portion of their time, money, and thoughts. But in an honest evaluation, Jesus comes in a poor second, or third, or fourth, to the things they really value.....like money, security, comfort, and the good regard of their peers.

But the Lord says, *Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.* (Matt. 22:37) *Take up your cross daily and follow me.* (Mark 8:34)

- Lukewarm people think about life on earth much more than eternity in heaven. Daily life is mostly focused on today's to-do list, this week's schedule, and next month's vacation.

But the Lord says, *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.* (Col. 3:2) *For as I have often told you before and now say again with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But*

*our citizenship is in heaven.....(Phil. 3:18)*

- Lukewarm people are continually concerned with playing it safe; they always try to control their lives and their circumstances. Their focus is on safe living with no serious consideration about sacrificing and risking for God.

But the Lord says, *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God who provides for us. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. (1 Tim 6:17) Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Mt. 10:28)*

### **WHAT HAPPENS TO LUKEWARM "CHRISTIANS?"**

As I see it, a "lukewarm Christian" is an oxymoron; there's no such thing. To put it plainly, churchgoers who are "lukewarm" are not Christians. We will not see them in heaven. Their end will be an eternal hell.

The Lord says, *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm - neither hot nor cold - I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, "I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing." But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. (Rev. 3:15-18)*

This passage is where our modern understanding of *lukewarm* comes from. Jesus says to the church that because they are lukewarm, He is going to spit them out of his mouth. There is no gentle rendering of the word "spit" in Greek. This is the only time it is used in the New Testament, and it connotes gagging, hurling, retching, vomiting. Why do people assume Jesus is speaking to saved people?

Do you think that God "spits" saved people out of his mouth? When you read the words, "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked," do you think that He is describing saints? When He counsels them to "buy white clothes to wear in order to cover their shameful nakedness," does it sound like advice to the saved? I thought people who were saved were already made white by Christ's blood.

### **PLEASE NOTE!**

This profile of the lukewarm is not an all-inclusive definition of what it means to be a Christian, nor is it intended to be used as ammunition to judge our fellow believers' salvation. Instead, as 2 Cor. 13:5 says, it is a call to "examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves."

We are all messed up human beings, and no one is totally immune to the behaviors described in the previous examples. Paul acknowledges in Chapter 7 of 1st Corinthians the struggle that even he had in

overcoming the sin in his life. He wrote that he did "the very things I hate." I think we can all identify with his struggle. However, there is a great difference between a life that is characterized by these examples of lukewarm people and a life that is in the process of being radically transformed. Remember that these are examples that God has given us by which to examine ourselves.

### **BROTHER, ARE YOU REALLY SAVED?**

(from Glenn) On Friday mornings, my daughter, Jeannine, my sister, Clarice (she is my baby sister, only 88 years old), and I go yard saling. Eating out and yard saling are about the only things that we can do for fun. We meet some very interesting people, see some beautiful homes and landscaping, and buy some stuff we don't need, a lot of which we pass along to the Salvation Army.

Last Friday, during our adventure, I shared the Gospel with three different men. The first guy was in his 50's and was selling a lot of mechanic's tools. He impressed me with his seriousness when I asked him, "Have you reached the place in your spiritual life where you know that you will go to heaven when you die?" He said, "I hope I will, I try to live right and to help other people."

I said, "You are saying that you hope you do enough good things so that you will pass the test and earn your way to heaven. But do you know what the Bible says about that?" He said he didn't know. "The Bible says that we cannot earn our way to heaven no matter how many good things we do. That it is not our goodness that pays our way to heaven, but the goodness of Jesus Christ who died for our sins on the cross. When we believe in Him, trust Him, surrender our lives to Him, then we receive heaven as a gift." The man had never heard that explanation in all of his life, and I asked him to please read the New Testament, especially the book of John, and think about these things. I believe this was a divine appointment, and I pray for that dear man.

A little while later I was in another yard sale in a garage talking with a slender man with snow white hair. He told me he was 75 years old. I asked him the same question, if he knew for sure that he was going to heaven when he died. He answered in almost the same words as the first man, that he had lived a good life, and he added that he had a church background. I told him that the Bible says we can't earn our way to heaven, etc, but that Jesus Christ paid our way to heaven when He died on the cross. He immediately said, "Oh, I believe that. So that means I am going to heaven, right?" I said if he truly believed in his heart, that is what the Bible says. He then said, in a jocular manner, "So that means I'm going to heaven but I can continue to live in my 'ornery' way, correct? Ha, ha." I tried to explain some scriptural truths to him, but it was clear that he didn't take any of this seriously. I had a strong desire, which I resisted, to grab that old guy and shake him. He is in danger, imminent danger because of his age, but his mind is closed to reality. Frankly, I think that man represents a lot of church people. He may agree in his mind that Jesus was the Son of God and died for our sins, but that belief has not penetrated his hard heart,

and he is certainly not going to let it interfere with his independence and his “ornery” lifestyle.

In the book of Romans, Paul declares repeatedly that we humans are in a desperate condition: *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and The wages of sin is death.* The solution, he explains, is faith: *This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.* (Ro. 3:22) He explains this further in Romans 10:9 - *That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

Very simple and clear-cut, right? Just believe it and confess it verbally. But notice what it is that we must confess: “Jesus is Lord.” Jesus cannot be your Savior unless He is your Lord, your Master, your God. And you must believe it “in your heart,” not just in your head, like that poor old guy in the garage. Paul challenges us a little later in his epistle: *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual act of worship. Don’t be conformed to the world, be transformed by the renewing of your mind.* (Ro. 12:1-2) Ah, so! If we believe the Gospel in our heart, it should result in such a drastic transformation in our life that we become a living sacrifice, dedicated in love and worship and service to our Lord.

Many of the church people in America have never heard that message, or if they heard it they didn’t believe it. They believe that there is a God and think that is all that is required, but the Bible says that, *Even the demons believe that there is one God - and shudder.* (James 2:19) It is clear that even though the demons believe in God, they are not saved and they are not going to heaven.

Why do we preachers try to “sell” Christianity to reluctant customers by making it appear so easy to be a Christian? “Just slip your hand up and silently repeat these words and you will go to heaven when you die.” Really? (Let me add that I know of people who slipped their hand up and repeated that simple prayer and their life was radically transformed. They meant it in their heart.) “Just join our church and our denomination. We are the true church, the ark. Just get in the ark and you and all your family will be saved, just like Noah.” “No, we are the true church. Peter started our church, and the Pope has inherited his mantle. Come home to the true church and be saved.” “No, our church is the true church. Just confess Christ as your Savior, be baptized by immersion, and follow the rules of attendance and giving we will provide, and you will be saved.” “If you join our church and speak in tongues you will really be saved.” Etc, etc, etc.

But in the four Gospels Jesus seemed to be trying to talk people out of being His disciples. He said, “Count the cost and make sure you are willing to pay the price.” He said to the rich young man, “Give away everything you own and come follow me.” He said, “If they hate me and persecute me and kill me, you can expect exactly the same treatment.” He said, “Take up your cross and follow me.” He said, “In comparison to your love and

dedication to me, you must hate your father and mother and wife and children and even your own life.”

Jesus doesn’t just want us to have good theology, but to know and love Him. 1st John 2:3 tells us, *We know that we have come to know him if we obey him. The man who says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

#### **PLEASE, PLEASE NOTE:**

I don’t want true believers to doubt their salvation as they read this book (Francis Chan writes). In the midst of our failed attempts at loving Jesus, His grace covers us.

Each of us has lukewarm practices in our life; therein lies the senseless, extravagant grace of it all. The Scriptures show clearly that there is room for our failure and sin in our pursuit of God.

(from Glenn: “Whew! That is my only hope!”) His mercies are new every morning. His grace is sufficient. I’m not saying that when you mess up, it means you were never really a genuine Christian in the first place. If that were true, no one could follow Christ.

The distinction is perfection, which none will attain on this earth, and a posture of obedience and surrender. (When you fall, which you will, don’t give up and listen to that evil voice that is condemning you. Get up, ask forgiveness, and continue to move toward the Lord whose mercy is reaching out to you - - - never more than when you realize your hopelessness apart from His help.)

Remember that God so loved the world (you and me) that He gave His only Son to die on the cross for us. Jesus didn’t come to condemn us but to save us - from our weakness, rebelliousness, addictions, self-destructive nature. He loves us. Really. Hasn’t he proved that to you ten thousand times? Trust Him, give your heart to Him once again. Ask Him to help you love Him back.

But, finally, my dear friends, don’t make the Christian life easier than the Holy Bible makes the Christian life. There is no such thing as “Christianity Lite.” Paul says in many different ways, *Test yourself, examine yourself,* to make sure you are really saved.” Peter tells us that our faith will be tested by fire in this life, and he says that believers should *“be diligent to make your call and election sure.”* And he gives us a list of things to help us honestly appraise our spiritual condition (2 Peter 1:1-13). James warns again and again that *“faith without works (obedient actions) is dead.”* And Jesus, in the most frightening words in the Bible, says: *Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.* (Matthew 5:21-27)

Am I being extreme or narrow-minded or harsh when I tell you that we had better pay attention to what the Bible actually says? The last chapter of the last book in the Old Testament says, *For behold, the Day (of judgment) is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud and wicked people will be burned up like stubble.* The last chapter of the last book in the New Testament says, *Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me,*

*to give to everyone according to his work. Blessed are those who do God's commands, but outside are the sexually immoral, sorcerers, murderers, idolaters, and all those who are living a lie.*

I believe that Day is upon us, as expressed in the following:

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**WHAT IS COMING TO AMERICA?**

. I have just read and thought about Ezekiel, chapter 33, which says that if you have been called to be a Watchman and you see judgment coming to your city and don't warn people, you will be held accountable by God. Although it may be grandiosity on my part, I believe that I, along with many thousands of other ordinary Christians, have been shown through prophecies, dreams or visions the judgment that is coming on America, and the following represent my honest belief. This is not a "word from God" but is what I truly believe is immediately ahead of us.

Many Christians consider Jonathan Cahn to be a prophet, possibly the most important prophet that God has raised up to speak to America in this hour. He just said that America is right now, in July, 2020, in a small window of opportunity to repent and turn to God or face horrendous judgment which will include persecution of Christians. (Find him on Google or Facebook and listen to his prophecy.)

I believe our window of opportunity has already passed and that God's judgment is inevitable and is already being seen and experienced. In the prophetic dreams that I had starting in 1998, I believe that God showed me that His judgment on America had been decreed, and that He would not change or relent. Billy Graham's wife, Ruth, famously said, "If God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." She said that more than 40 years ago. What would she say now?

In one month, the month of March, 2020, our nation changed in drastic ways. Businesses, hospitals, churches were shut down, etc. I believe that before the end of the year there will be another massive shift that will make what happened this past March seem trivial. I believe that around November, national election time, there will be something like a civil war. (At this point in time, the animosity of many on both sides of the political spectrum is so severe that they will be unwilling to accept the legitimacy of their hated and despised enemies should they win the coming election.)

If there is a second wave of Covid19, which seems already to be occurring, the government will undoubtedly close down all "non-essential businesses". (It is interesting that liquor stores, pot stores, and big box stores were deemed essential, but that small businesses, medical clinics and churches were deemed non-essential) Since most small businesses are already on life-support, this will result in the bankruptcy of

hundreds of thousands of businesses, and the loss of their taxes to government.

As we all know, the unconscionable murder of the black man, George Floyd, by a white police officer resulted in a national backlash against racism (with which we all agree), that became focused against police and law

and order. And then the cities started burning.

Blue state governors and mayors ordered law enforcement to stand down or (in Mayor Bill de Blasio's words) to "use a light touch" with the rioters. They shirked their most profound responsibility: protecting civil peace. The failure to quell the riots means that more are inevitable.

I also believe that a meltdown of our economy is well underway and that national bankruptcy is very near. You don't have to be an accountant to understand that if your family income is \$50,000 per year but that you spend \$60,000 or \$70,000 or \$80,000 per year, year after year, that there will at some point be an accounting. As a nation, we are living far above our means. At the same time, our national infrastructure is falling apart: our bridges, dams, electric grid, water and sewer lines. Our national leaders of both parties are totally irresponsible, but these are the people we elect year after year because we are receiving benefits from the government in one form or another.

My dear friends, I think that most people in our country are under the illusion that we will get through this present situation and that everything will go back to the way things were, more or less. Things are never going back to the way they were, and the suffering ahead for our country and the world is more extreme than we can imagine.

Some Christians will say to me: "Glenn, you are being too negative. Just have faith in God. Think positive. Confess positive things." And I respond that they don't believe in the God of the Bible, they believe in Santa Claus. God has clearly told us that He loves us and that He has a good plan for our lives - - if we will love Him and obey Him. He tells us all through the Bible that if we ignore Him and disobey Him that there will be terrible consequences. Why don't we believe what He says?

If there is truth and reality in what I am saying, what then should we believers do? I think we should pray for ourselves, our families, our churches, and our nation, that we should repent and do what the Lord tells us to do. He has not turned His back on us in this time but plans to use us mightily for His loving purposes.

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**NEED A CAR**

My youngest son, Matt, has been employed in management for a luggage company at Cherry Creek Mall in Denver for many years. Due to the pandemic, his store and the mall closed down three months ago. He has learned that his company is probably not coming back, and the mall may also close permanently. Then his elderly auto went kaput and he found that repairs would cost more than the car is worth.

I'm looking for a car for him that still has some miles left on it. Matt has some savings to pay but not what a drivable car would cost.

My email address and phone number are on Page 1.  
Thanks for your consideration.

Glenn

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.

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