

After a hard day of school or club activities, how many of you really enjoy going home and grabbing a nice, *lukewarm* cup of milk? Nice and *room temperature*....

Probably none of you. Actually, of all the things I dislike most in the world, warm milk ranks right up there. It's almost as revolting to me as *natto*... Whoops! I guess I'd better not say that in Japan, huh?!

In today's Bible passage, John is recording messages from the "the one called the AMEN"—God, of course. In this book—Revelation, in chapters 2 & 3, there are seven short letters. These little letters were written about 80 years after Jesus had died, and each was addressed to a separate church in what is now modern-day Turkey. The passage we read today was from the letter written to the church in Laodicea.

But what's interesting to me is what God says to these people—"I wish that you were cold or hot. But you are not cold or hot—you're lukewarm—so you make me sick."

The truth is that *God loves people that are hot*. Think about the New Testament when Jesus was criticizing the Pharisees. They were not bad people, were they? In one place Jesus says to them, "you give your money to the temple just like you should, you wash your hands before you eat, you pray every day, you don't break any big laws." These are all good things, right? But then he says, "But you Pharisees neglect the things which God really considers important—justice for the weak, forgiveness to people who have hurt you, and honesty about your own intentions."

Obviously, Jesus thought the Pharisees were *lukewarm*. They weren't *bad*—they weren't *cold*, you might say; but they weren't *hot* either. They were just basically like everybody else. They were like lukewarm milk on a hot day—something that didn't have any power to refresh. Just plain liquid.

What about our lives. Think about this for a moment. What's your life like? Is it *cold*? That is, do you *hate* people? Do *bad things* all the time? Don't care about where the world is going?

Or is it *hot*? Like Jesus, do you long for the world to look like the beautiful, peaceful Kingdom foretold in the Old Testament book of Isaiah chapters 2 and 9? Do you long for all the people in the world to love each other, and to learn to work together, and to honor God and our planet and each other more than anything else in life? Are you earnest about finding what Jesus calls the "small gate and the narrow path that leads to life?" Are you one of those people who could change the world?

Or are you just lukewarm? Just getting by... Just going through the motions. Doing what you do. Pretty much like everyone else that won't be remembered 50 years after they're dead.

I think you know what kind of person God wishes we were. God wishes we were fervent people. And the fact is that the world needs us to be hot. Because if some people aren't hot, this project we call "planet Earth" is bound to fail. So what kind of person will you be? I can't answer that for you. Only *you* can answer that question... *Hot or cold or just so-so?*