**Abiding**  
(grow as a disciple yourself)

- One of the greatest struggles for American Christianity is our ability to compartmentalize our faith, believing that our life outside of church is separate from the faith we profess inside the church. The church of Laodicea received a strong warning from Jesus in the book of Revelation for this compartmentalized or lukewarm faith. Similar to the church of Laodicea, when we look at our lives from a global prospective we can claim that “I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing. (Rev 3:17) Unchecked, our affluence leads us to see the work of our hands rather than our abiding relationship with Christ as the source of our provision. This results in a compartmentalized faith that declares “I can handle this”, unaware we are sacrificing the power of God who can transform lives through us.

- As you reflect upon Revelation 3:14-22 ask yourself the following:
  - Do I give God leadership over all areas of my life or do I have areas that are off limits?
  - Would people from different parts of your life (work, family, neighbors) be able to say the same thing about your character and faith?

**Leading**  
(learn to facilitate your group more effectively)

- A relational environment is vital to a successful small group. As we discussed last week a relational environment is one that fosters a sharing of our highs and lows as we seek to build one another up in Christ. Mutual accountability can be one of the hardest traits for our leaders. We intentionally refer to our group leaders as facilitators because we recognize that we are the same as everyone else in the group, sinners seeking guidance on loving and obeying Jesus. As a facilitator, model for your group what it means to share your struggles. Don’t be afraid to lead out as this provides permission for the rest of the group to do the same. Specifically ask a few members of your group to speak into these struggles providing encouragement, and as needed providing words of correction.

**Shepherding**  
[know the sheep, feed the sheep, lead the sheep, protect the sheep]

- Share a meal with a member of your group outside of group time this week. Invite one of the people in your group to meet you for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Spend time getting to know that person. Be curious and then listen. Ask about their family, their work, and their dreams for the coming year. Ask, “How is your walk with God?” At the end of the meal, pray and thank God for them and for your time together.
MESSY SPIRITUALITY – WEEK 3 – DON’T COMPARTMENTALIZE

Open in Prayer

Welcome/Introductions

Remind group of Small Group guidelines

Ask a hook question [Ask a thought provoking question to get the group focused]

Describe your idea of “the good life”.

Share background for the story [Provide context by sharing what comes before the story in the Bible]

John was the last surviving apostle at the time he wrote the book of Revelation late in the first century. While exiled on an island as punishment for sharing the gospel, Jesus appeared to Him and shared God’s final act of judging sin and restoring His relationship with His people.

Chapters 2 and 3 outline a set of warnings given to the major cities of this time. The final and most severe warning falls to the church in Laodicea. This city was a wealthy city, known for its banking and clothing industries, whose citizens were living in luxury. Jesus compares their faith to the local river, which was fed by a hot spring a few miles away creating undesirable lukewarm water. Rather than fully obeying or fully denying Jesus, they claimed Christ in name but did not invest into an abiding relationship with Him to produce life change.

Tell the story - this week’s passage is Revelation 3:14-22

Rebuild the story [Group members tell the story together based on what they remember]

Read the story out loud [Read the scripture passage to see if anything was added or omitted]

Discuss these questions:

1. What is the criticism of the Laodicea church?
2. How were the people of Laodicea told to repent? (Note: Verse 19-20 focuses on the concept of a genuine relationship between two people using the cultural metaphors of opening a door and eating with someone).
3. How have we shielded our faith (compartmentalize our faith) from other aspects of our lives?
4. What is one way we can challenge one another to further develop our relationship with Christ that leads to life change in all areas of our lives?

Ask someone to retell the story [Ask for a volunteer from the group]

Assign next week’s passage - Philippians 3:1-11 (Note: This passage is not a typical story. Let the person doing the story know that it may be easier to do a broad paraphrase of this passage and then be intentional about reading through it as a group.)

Close in Prayer