

“A Revelation at Taco Bell”

By Jason Vanderlaan

I remember the days when Taco Bell only had Mild and Hot sauce packets. They were sad, unfortunate days that I like to refer to as the Dark Ages. But I also remember the glorious day when they introduced a new level of intensity to spice up our bean burritos: the Fire sauce packet. Ah, yes, a glorious day indeed. And since I love spicy food (and anything remotely related to fire), I was instantly addicted. I’ve never gone back.

The next evolution in Taco Bell’s sauce packets came when they started putting sayings on them. I’m sure you’ve all seen them, but one of my favorites was the one that said “Where are you taking me?” In fact, I liked it so much that I taped it on the passenger’s side dashboard of my car. It enjoyed a long, luxurious life there until one fateful day when my friend Gene was riding with me and noticed it. He laughed and proceeded to poke it continuously. Unfortunately, Gene didn’t realize his own strength and without warning my beloved Fire sauce packet exploded, splattering its content all over the car.

We held a very solemn funeral and mourned for many days. But life goes on, and I decided recently that it was time to begin searching for a new Fire sauce packet to replace the deceased one. And I think I may have found one.

On my way home for Thanksgiving break, my brother and I pulled over at the official food stop of traveling college students everywhere: Taco Bell. I grabbed a handful of Fire packets and found this among them: “Thanks for rescuing me, Mild was getting on my nerves.” After laughing, I paused to consider the deeper, philosophical meaning contained within this little packet’s wisdom.

What is it about mildness that gets on our nerves? Maybe Mild sauce at Taco Bell isn’t all that bad, but what about people? There is something unnerving about people who are neither hot nor cold, but mild and apathetic. They neither love nor hate; they just don’t care. And for some reason that is worse than being completely hateful. As Andrew Schwab wrote, “I fear the evil deeds of wicked men for certain. But what I fear the most is the indifference of every single person I see passing me every single day.”

For example, if I was getting beaten to a pulp in some alleyway and I cried out for help to a guy standing nearby, if he just shrugged his shoulders and walked away that would bother me more than the actions of the punk who was currently whooping on me.

Or say you’re dating someone and you ask them if they love you, and they respond, “You know, it isn’t that I hate you; I just don’t really care either way about you.” Ouch! There is something more painful about not being worth either love or hate that is worse even than being hated with great passion.

Perhaps this is why Jesus says in Revelation 3 that He wishes we were either hot or cold and not lukewarm. Imagine how Christ must feel when we treat all that He has done for us with a mild indifference. Knowing that He gave His life for us and took our sins upon Himself, a response of anything but passionate love is almost unthinkable!

So let me ask a question: Are you a mild Christian? If so, perhaps you need to take a trip over to Taco Bell, load up your 7-layer burrito with some Fire sauce, and do some thinking about Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary. I know, it seems like an odd combination, but you may just have a Taco Bell revelation like me and decide that you’re tired of being mild for Christ; its time to be on fire!

