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Series: For the Time is Near
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Wake Up, Dead Church!
Revelation 3:1-6

Please open your Bibles to Revelation, chapter 3. So, we've gone through some churches, haven't we? We started out in Ephesus, then went to Smyrna, over a little to Pergamum, then over to Thyatira. This Sunday we are in Sardis, which is a city located about 30 miles east of Ephesus. So we're doing the circuit, going around and visiting these different churches.

Something that I said at the beginning of this series within the series of Revelation, is that although these are seven letters to seven churches in Asia, we know that seven is the number of completion or perfection for the Lord, and we know that these letters can just be combined into one letter to the church today. We shouldn't approach these different letters and look for which one applies to us as a church. We should really look at these seven letters and understand that they *all* apply to us in some way, shape, or form.

This morning as we take a look at this letter, one thing that really came to the surface for me, something that we need to hold in the back of our minds as we study these six verses is one statement, and that is: "Wake up!" Are you sleeping? Wake up! Because Jesus deemed this church a dead church. Not, "You may be dying", but He said, "You're a dead church! Sardis, you look great on the outside, but on the inside, you're dead!" Those are loving words by the way, because Jesus is still speaking to this church. The title of this morning's message is: *Wake up, Dead Church!* That's my prayer for the church today.

Although we're commended by the world; although we're commended by the neighborhoods or the place around us, we shouldn't take that in the place of being commended by the Lord. In fact, we should "beware when all men speak well of you." [Luke 6:26]

So, let's start out by reading Revelation 3, beginning in verse one:

"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

"I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God.³ Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. ⁴ Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The

Wake Up, Dead Church!

one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

[Prayer] *Father, we want to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. You say, "He who has an ear", yes, You speak to the church as a whole, and yet You require an individual response. It is not us together who will be before You answering for what we've done and not done, said and not said. It will be us personally, individually before You. So therefore, I pray this morning that he who has an ear let us hear what the Spirit is saying to us. I pray if there is any kind of laziness, any kind of reluctance, or neglect in our walks with You, Lord that this morning it would be done away with, that Father, You would reinstate passion in our hearts for You, and devotion, Lord, that we would be completely committed to You, to respond to Your love for us by loving You in an obedient manner to Your word and to Your Person. Father, we thank You that even though this church You have proclaimed to be dead, obviously there is still hope. And with You, all things are possible. I also pray that we would not look to the church as if it's defeated today, that we would pray for the church, we would lift it up and understand that what seems to be dead and what You say is dead can be resurrected in You. That's true for the individual as well. What everyone else has given up on I pray that we would understand that in You there is hope, and that we can get up one more time and walk with You. Father, I pray that You would stir Your people up, encourage us, encourage each and everyone of us. If there's anyone here who does not know that relationship, that this morning would be the day of salvation. We thank You and we want to commit this time into Your hands. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

In that reminder of not picking and choosing what letter applies to this church or not, let us understand that the people of 2000 years ago were no different than we are today. We have the same ways about us, we have the same inclinations, we have the same temptations, just in a different way but it's the same thing!

Sardis was the capital city of Lydia, presently known as Sart located in the Manisa province of present day Turkey. It was an important city (I think I may have said 30 miles, but it's actually 50 miles) east of Ephesus. It was the junction where five roads met together so it was an important route for commerce, and it continued on the Aegean coast. It was a place of great trade, of great wealth.

Secondly, it was also known as an important military center because it was situated...get this, this must've been just grand and amazing...it sits 1500 feet above the floor so you can understand that it was difficult to get to, to penetrate. It was *almost* impenetrable.

Sometimes we think that as we're walking with Christ, that we're in Him, we're in church, we're doing good, that we, in our own lives are impenetrable. But listen, no one is impenetrable. Sardis wasn't, and spiritually speaking for us, we aren't either. That's why we need to wake up. In a world where compromise has infiltrated the church, and we see that, we need to wake up! We need to stand watch!

For Sardis, because of their wealth, because of their military strength, because of their location, they were known as a soft people. They were soft and lacked discipline and dedication. The Greek historian Herodotus tells the story of the fall of Sardis that I believe is indicative of people today.

King Cyrus had come to Sardis to try and figure out how he could penetrate the city. He took his army and he made an offer, he said, "Hey, listen, for anyone who can figure out how to penetrate Sardis, I will give you riches." So those in the army studied it. They came and they sat at the foot of the these cliffs that went up into Sardis and studied it. One day, one of soldiers of Sardis dropped his helmet down and it fell down the cliff. This

Wake Up, Dead Church!

one soldier of King Cyrus, went down this secret path, picked up his helmet and went back up. He gathered some soldiers and went back to the location, which he had marked very well, at night. They got up to the top of the cliffs and as they went up and got there they met the city walls and thought, "Oh, this is where the fight is going to take place. We're already up here, so now they don't have an advantage." But when they got there, they were surprised because no one was keeping watch. No one was there. So what happened? They went right in and they conquered Sardis.

The Sardis soldiers were so confident that no one could climb these cliffs that they felt no need to keep a diligent watch so they were easily conquered. "Hey, the cliffs are there. We're up here. No one's going to climb up them." But if you can climb down, you certainly can climb up. And so they were conquered.

This happened again about 200 years later when Antiochus attacked and conquered the over confident city that failed to set a watch.

These are spiritual realities in our lives. What happened 10 years ago, don't think that it can't happen again. Maybe we set up watch for some time but we get over confident, we get lazy, we neglect the watch, and all of a sudden we fall! We get back up, we're walking with the Lord, and at some point we may let our guard down again.

This is true of the church. What was true of the city is true of the church. Although the church may appear to be impenetrable, the church must understand that the enemy *never* sleeps! Never sleeps! And never should we sleep! We should always have a watchman on the wall.

Jesus warned that there would be wolves in sheep's clothing that would infiltrate the church. The apostle Paul also warned against false teachers that would come.

1 Peter 5:8 says, ***Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*** That's what he does! Steal, kill, and destroy. That's what he set out to do.

Jesus' Self-Description (v. 1)

But we must be reminded of verse 1 and how Jesus described Himself. This is by the way, a word of encouragement for this church. "Hey, listen. As I describe Myself just keep this in mind as I'm giving you this rebuke, but it's also a loving admonition. I want you to understand Who it is that is speaking to you." He describes Himself in this manner. He says, ***"The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars."*** Jesus basically describes Himself as the One who is Master over every spiritual power and authority. We must remember that!

I talked about superstition earlier. Listen, there's no room for superstition in the life of a Christian. None whatsoever! Fear? No room in the life of a Christian! None at all! Why? Because we have one Master, one Authority, one Power that is sovereign and over them all! That's how He describes Himself.

A fullness of the Holy Spirit in Himself has been dispatched and has been given to the church perfectly, and completely. Everything that we need as a church we have at our disposal. Did you know that? You don't need to worry. What we need to do is walk obediently with the Lord, faithfully unto Him. And know that as we walk by the Spirit, that's all we need to do! In His truth, everything will fall into place. And even though this church in Sardis is being rebuked, it's not outside the hand of Jesus. "You're perfectly in My hand, you're perfectly in My care. Do you know that? Don't worry. Do not be anxious about anything." Anything! Nothing at all because the fullness of the church remains in the fullness of His hand.

Wake Up, Dead Church!

Of course we know that the seven stars represent the seven churches, which is the fullness of the church. He had these letters written to the seven churches, but we also know that, and I repeat, that number seven speaks of perfection and completeness in the Bible. Therefore, the fullness of the church body composed of saved sinners remains and will always remain in the hand of Jesus Christ, who is the Groom and Head of the bride, the church. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. [Matthew 16:18]

The church in Sardis had this reputation from the surrounding communities of being alive. "Oh, man! They're a good bunch of people. They do good, they're busy and have meetings all the time. I can see them coming together!" They have a good reputation of being alive and well. By all outward appearances they were a fully functioning church to the surrounding community, but remember that commendation was coming from them and not Jesus. Jesus was not commending them.

So be careful! Be careful where you are receiving your accolades from because if you have the voice of people around you saying, "You're a good person!" Does that necessarily mean that you're in a good place with the Lord? No, it doesn't. Not at all.

Jesus had no words of commendation for them, but He did remind them of what they had received and heard. Jesus had no words of doctrinal correction either. He didn't correct them and tell them that their doctrine off. It seems like they were simply existing as a church, but you can say that they were a sterile church. They weren't producing anything that was pleasing to the Lord. He wasn't going to allow them to continue in this manner. Jesus said, "If you continue on, I'm going to come against you."

It would be a day of judgment for those within the church. If they continued in this manner and did not change, then there would be judgment. So we need to realize this: It wasn't anyone on the outside that was saying that they were dead, it was Jesus Himself. He deemed them dead, but not without hope or else He would not have rebuked them. It would've been over!

He says, "I know your works." What church is there that He doesn't know the works of? He knows all of our works. He knows our hearts and He's interested in the heart. The works of the hands should be the fruit of the Spirit. There are certain characteristics that should identify us as being of Christ; the fruit of the Spirit.

He said, "I know your works. You're a busy church and you're all over the place! I need you to understand something; it's not pleasing to Me." A good reputation does not guarantee sound spiritual character. There are religious people who appear to the world as very good people and have great reputations. I can think of false religions that are very good family people. They dress well, comb their hair really good, don't grow big beards like this, and yet they are far from God. Great reputation to the world does not mean that we have a great reputation before Jesus because He sees all of us for who we really are.

I was thinking of reverence for the Lord. If we were to truly understand that God is with us wherever we are, if we truly understood the love of Christ and the sacrifice, if we were to think about the blood shed on Calvary, we would understand, truly, a little bit more of what it means to know the power of the cross. Because it would speak to us and really put us in the place to where we would be fearful, truly fearful to let God down. Every moment, every thought would truly be taken captive. We would be quick to ask for forgiveness. Why? Because we don't want to be in a bad place, out of place before God.

If Jesus were to come right now for His church, where would I be? Right now in this moment, doing what I'm doing, saying what I'm saying, thinking what I'm thinking, all of those things really would be put in their proper

Wake Up, Dead Church!

place before the Lord if we thought that way. It's reverence. It's having a good, healthy, proper reverence for the Lord. Jesus sees our hearts.

So, they were not encouraged to fight against anything. Again, no false doctrine, no persecution even. It wouldn't have been good if they were at least being prosecuted, but they weren't. Not even a rebuke against the allowing the practice of sexual immorality, or idol worship. None of that! But yet, Jesus told them that they were dead! D-E-A-D! They were dead! The building they met in to worship might as well have been a coffin with pallbearers carrying them to their grave. It was there that Jesus met the procession and desired for them to resurrect from the dead. He didn't allow them to go all the way to the grave. He met them there and wrote this letter to them.

Romans 13:11 says, ***"Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed."*** Brothers and sisters the time is short! Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

Jesus desires a resurrection. Turn with me to Luke, chapter seven. We have Matthew, Mark, and then Luke. Luke 7:11-17: ***¹¹ Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" ¹⁷ And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.***

Also, go over to Luke, chapter 8. This is all evidence that Jesus desires a resurrection. Luke 8:40-42: ***⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. ⁴¹ And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, ⁴² for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying.***

Now skip down to verse 49: ***While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." ⁵⁰ But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well." ⁵¹ And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. ⁵² And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping." ⁵³ And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." ⁵⁵ And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat. ⁵⁶ And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.***

I wanted us as a church to read those two stories together because we need to understand that that's what Jesus desires. He doesn't desire death. He desires resurrection. He desires for what is dead to come alive in Him.

As the procession for the young man was coming along and as they were carrying him on a bier, which is basically a frame where the casket or body is laid on, He stops the procession and He just simply touched the frame and He spoke. He returned the son to his mother. She's a widow. He had compassion. A compassion that moved Him and brought life out of death. All it takes is His word.

Wake Up, Dead Church!

We see it in the daughter of Jairus. She was 12 years old, a little girl. And He went in, and of course they laughed at Him, everyone is saying, "She's dead! We know what dead looks like. We know that there's no life in someone who's not breathing, there's no pulse, or anything." And they laughed but afterward, in both occasions, they were astonished! They were amazed.

As Pastor Ruben taught last week, this is astonishing grace! It leaves you just besides yourself. That's what happens when you come to Christ. That is amazing! That is radical! That is like, "Who are you?! I know the old Raul, but who are you?" That should be the kind of resurrection that comes immediate and definitive in every sense.

So, let's go back to Revelation, chapter 3. Although the spiritual state of the church in Sardis was a reflection of the city's historical character, it was, I remind you, not too late. Although the church was working it was not a complete work, it was not a perfected work according to Jesus. Then He gave them instructions on how to make it right before Him. That's what I love about the Word of God. He doesn't just rebuke us, and admonish us, but He brings us through that, and brings us to: "This is what you need to do in order to stand right before Me." Because that's what Jesus desires.

Although everyone around us has given up on us, the Lord never does. The Lord said that He would never leave us, He would never forsake us. In other words, never turn His back on us. He'll never do that! And He wishes that none should perish but that *all* should reach repentance. Every single person.

Wake up! (v. 2)

What was Jesus' word of correction? Look at verse 2. What does the New King James say? "**Be watchful,...**" Be watchful, but in both of these of these instances, both of these stories, what is the first thing that needed to happen with these two people before *anything* else happened? WAKE UP!! You're awake now, right? That's what needed to happen! And you know what you just felt right there was probably what they felt in their spirit. They were like, "WHAT?!" That's what needs to happen first! And that's why when we take a look at our verse here the first thing is *wake up, be aware, look around you, know Who stands before you*. That's the first order of business; *wake up!* You can't do anything throughout the day if you don't wake up!

"Hey, where's Raul?"

"He's still in bed, he hasn't woken up."

"Wow! There's a bunch of things for him to do today."

"He can't do anything, he hasn't woken up!"

Jesus said, "You're sleeping and you don't even know it. Sit up! Open your eyes and be watchful! You went to sleep half-way through walking with Me and put it on cruise-control."

Do you realize that? There are many people in the church who have done just that. You started out well with much passion and devotion, and just seemed to be lulled into a spiritual sleep at some point, and are now simply a stagnant pool of water." Jesus is saying to the church...not to anyone else..."Wake up! It's time to wake up!" I can tell you that the church is an amazing organism. It's living and it is powerful what it can do when it wakes up!

Once you wake up realize that there's a lot of weakness, there's a lot of atrophy that's taking place, but listen, there are some things that can be strengthened up. Strengthen what remains! It's little, but hey, you need to

Wake Up, Dead Church!

strengthen it up because it's about to die. This indicates that although they were dead, they were not out of hope's reach! They were *not* hopeless, whatsoever.

Once someone wakes up, then they can see that some things need to be strengthened. What is it? What's missing from your spiritual life? Is it prayer, is it time in God's Word? Are you being a student of God's Word? Because the Bible tells us, "**Study to show yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.**" [2 Timothy 2:15]

Are you being that student? John said, "**I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.**" [3 John 1:4] Walking is something that is active, something that is purposeful. And walking is a word that can also be used as abiding which means that we are purposefully remaining with our eyes focused on, and walking toward the Lord *always*.

What is it that's missing? Prayer; devotion; study; service? That's one area, by the way church, I know that as a whole we can do quite a bit and it's great, but listen, there's more work to do. Where do you fit in the to the whole of the church? Service; maybe evangelizing; being a witness. At this point, it's not about how much the church can serve you. Things start changing when you understand, when you wake up, when you realize what needs to be strengthened with the individual, then you realize that "it's not about what the church can provide for *me*, but really, how can *I* serve the church? How can I serve my brothers and sisters? How can I really express my love for what God has done in my life through His Son? How can I do that?"

Remember God's Grace (v. 3a)

"Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent." Remember God's grace, "remember then what you received and heard" points to God's word and God's grace, a forgiveness and reconciliation that costs Jesus His life, His shed blood on our behalf. We need to remember that!

Do you remember when you first came to the Lord? Oh, man! It's an amazing moment and period in our lives to where we just realize God's grace, and we can't get enough of Him. We're filled with passion for Him. John is told to write this: "**Keep it**". Don't lose sight of this grace because it will suffice to remind you of God's undeniable love toward you. It's love that moves you toward God; not His wrath toward you, but His wrath toward sin, but *grace toward you*. 1 John 4:19 says, "**We love because He first loved us.**"

He doesn't leave us there with *remember*, and keep it. No, there's one other word: repent. Repent is not just confession. "Ok, I agree with you, God, that's not right. You're right, You're always right. Ok, I confess." And then you keep walking that way. "You're right, though...You're right...You're right...You're right. I give!" No, you don't "give". You haven't surrendered. Listen, there has got to be confession, and then there has got to be repentance.

What is repentance? I heard this said earlier this week in a message:

It's like driving down the freeway and (guys) you finally realize that you're going down the wrong direction. You haven't used GPS, no Waze, no MapQuest, nothing. Maybe Siri gave you the wrong directions. But even though we agree "Ok, I'm going in the wrong direction. I need to get back *there*, but I keep going *this way*."

Confession is saying, "I'm going the wrong direction."

Repentance is getting off the freeway, going across the overpass, and going down in the *opposite* direction. *That's* what repentance is, and then you stay going in that direction.

Wake Up, Dead Church!

He called us to repent conscientiously; a purposeful act of man. It's our will, it's our decision. By the way, we can quench the Holy Spirit, we can aggravate. The only reason that we can do that is because we have a will, we can choose. So we should choose to draw near to God because the Word says that if we **"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you."** [James 4:8]

It's amazing to me how some people will have professed to have received God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ, but then have no movement in their lives toward Him. It's just like fire insurance, but it's false. There should be some fruit in your life, some evidence of your salvation! Remember that reverence that I was talking about? You should know that, you should feel it! A repentant life is always in motion toward the Author and Perfector of our faith. That direction is evidence of a genuine repentant life.

Final Warning (v. 3b)

And then we have a final warning in the second part of verse 3: **"If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you."** So, it's not that we don't have the Father trying to wake us up. We know how hard it is to sometimes wake up our children:

At first it's like, "Get up, son. It's time to get going."

Then a little later, "Wake up!"

Then, "Hey! You better get up! You're going to make me late now."

And then, it's like, "Come here, boy!"

"I'm up! I'm up! I'm up!"

Listen, He judges perfectly. He tells us all that we can't remain there. He's warning us, "Hey, listen, if you don't wake up, I'm going to come like a thief. You won't know what time I'm going to come, but I *will* come, rest assured and I will come against you."

Encouragement (v.4)

Verse 4: **"Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy."** There were still some who were righteous before the Lord. The only reason that we are worth to walk with Him is because we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. That's the *only* reason.

Reward (v. 5)

He gives them a word of encouragement too. Verse 5: **"The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."** There's a reward. Why? Because Jesus desires the church to resurrect. Once you get to that place to where you have repented, you have confessed, you're going toward Jesus and you're in Christ, you're righteous because of His righteousness clothing you; you are a resurrected individual, a whole new creation in Christ Jesus. The old things have past, behold all things are new. *All* things. Jesus desires the church to resurrect.

He desires for individuals to come to life. He's saying, "First order of business...WAKE UP! WAKE UP!" Let's wake up, church! Let's wake up the dead church. Let's wake up the dead people. Let's see what He can do as He touches the framework of what man has constructed to bury us, and as He speaks life into us we're going to

Wake Up, Dead Church!

raise up and astonish people around us to His glory. We will be that light and that salt to a dead world. Let's resurrect.

I just want to remind you of one last thing before we close, and that's the story of Lazarus. In raising Lazarus from the dead Jesus spoke and said this, "I am the resurrection and the life." [repeats] For the person who is in Christ he joins in this resurrected life. The person who is being referred to here as being a conqueror is one who is alive in Christ. Through repentance, through confession of sins to the Lord, through the asking of forgiveness and just simply surrendering to the Lord. That is the conqueror who name will never be blotted out of the Book of Life and who will be confessed by Jesus before the Father as His. By the way, the Book of Life is real and it will be read.

Revelation 20:12 says: ***And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.***

Revelation 20:15 says: ***And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*** Let me remind you that Jesus desires that none should perish but that *all* should reach repentance. [2 Peter 3:9]

Let me ask you this, are you in that place? Do you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Have you not only confessed, but have you also repented? Have you turned and are now walking with the Lord? Are you in that place? Because it's really important for us. The whole point of coming together, of going through these letters to the church is to get each and every one to a place of being right before Him.

Verse 6: ***"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*** Because God's desire is to know that each and every one of your names is written in the Book of Life.

It speaks of assurance. It's not a matter of being penciled in. It's not like, "Okay, so it says that we could be blotted out of the Book of Life." It's not a point of contending whether we could lose our salvation or not. Why wouldn't we just want to be assured of our salvation by the evidence that we see in Him, by what we know to be true? So, let's not get hung up on that, okay? God's not up there, so to speak, with a pencil saying, "Raul did it again. Here we go. Let's erase his name. Maybe he'll do good again." It's just being assured.

If you're being convicted then know the Spirit is alive and working in you. What that should lead to is repentance, which leads to life in Christ. So if you don't know salvation this morning, know that, simply, you are a sinner. Yes, you are a sinner. But the good news is that you are not without hope. Jesus died on the cross for you. He paid for all of your sins; past, present, and future. If you simply surrender, if you confess: "I'm going in the wrong direction. I have offended You, a perfect, just, and holy God. I want to be right with You." Do you know what it takes? It takes repentance. "I'm sorry. Forgive me. I want to turn, but I can't turn without Your forgiveness, without me being a whole new creature in You." And as you do that, you'll know a whole new life.

If this morning you've neglected to stand watch and find yourself in a lukewarm place in your spiritual walk with the Lord, then I invite you also to repent. I ask that you would stand up and that you would take ownership because in doing that you will know that the Lord has been there with arms open, ready to embrace you, and walk with you all along. He loves us and He wants us to wake up, all of us. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You for this timely message. I know that this is just one of seven letters that are written to the church and yet, Lord, they are applicable to us here at Refuge. Lord, we have not reached perfection in our work, in our service to You. There are areas that we need to wake up in and we need to strengthen in, so Lord, I ask that You would give us wisdom, discernment, and strength in just walking those things out to Your glory. I pray

Wake Up, Dead Church!

for individual souls here. I pray Lord, that You would move in their hearts right now, that they would not sit idly a moment longer, that You would speak to them and breathe life into them, that You would remind them of those things in their lives that need a resurrection. They need to be strengthened. I pray for individuals this morning, that they would be moved by Your love, that they would be moved by the understanding of Your grace, that although filled with sin, even it's just a little bit, it's enough to keep us out of heaven, and that this repentance, this call to turn their lives over to You is a call of love, because You don't wish that they would be condemned to eternal separation from You. You wish that they would know salvation, that they would come to repentance. So I pray for them that today would be the day of salvation, and the angels will rejoice in heaven over one sinner that repents. Lord, do a work in this place and in our hearts. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.