



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Revelation: The Church at Sardis
Speaker: Helen Kim Nowalk, Pastor of Community Life
Scripture: Revelation 3:1-6

“To the angel^[a] of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits^[b] of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

⁴Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. ⁵The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. ⁶Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

(NIV)

Sermon Outline:

The Book of Revelation is the most misunderstood, misapplied, and dangerous book of the Bible. It is prophetic literature, telling us what the future holds and **who** holds the future. It is apocalyptic literature which unveils and reveals what is happening behind the scenes, and it is also resistance literature, a letter that was sent to different churches to encourage them – we are to resist sin and ways of the evil one to walk in the way of the Chosen One.

Today’s letter to the church at Sardis is a hard one. The church at Sardis had a reputation for being alive and yet Jesus says they are dead. They were self-deceived because they thought they were alive but were actually dead. When Jesus sees the state of the church at Sardis, he gives them a harsh word because he loves them.

Today, we can also have a gap between the way we see ourselves and the reality of who we are. We can be easily self-deceived, believing we are one thing, but in actuality are something quite different.

The Church exists for the Gospel and the church at Sardis had forgotten that. Jesus is calling them to remember why they exist.

New Life Fellowship exists because God has called us to the Gospel. The Good News that the world was shattered by sin but God came after us with a costly love by giving us his only Son, Jesus, so that we could be with Him.

The Church is “Christ existing as community.”
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Are we dead or alive?

Community: To be a church means to be living in community and coming alongside one another, involved with one another.

Formation: We are to be growing in our relationship with Christ, becoming a people of God.

Mission: Jesus commands those who follow him to be on mission, where we are helping to form one another.

All three areas listed above are important parts to evaluate whether or not we are dead or alive in the Gospel.

Jesus is the One who can give words of life to our dying souls so that we too can walk victorious with Christ when he returns.

We have a living God who exists and is on the move and He calls us to a costly grace.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Helen Kim Nowalk, Pastor of Community Life, continues our sermon series through a portion of the Book of Revelation. Today Pastor Helen focuses on Jesus's strong words to the church in Sardis who had a reputation for being alive. Jesus's words reveal an important message for us about self-deception and what it means to be awake.

Sermon Questions:

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. We can have a gap between the way we see ourselves and the reality of who we are. Being honest with yourself, where do you see this gap happening in your life today? Journal your answer to this question, offering your response up to God in your quiet time with Him.
3. We are called to be in community with one another, coming alongside one another, sharing our lives with others. Are you in relationship with others where you know their stories, challenges and heartaches? Are you alive in this area of your life?
4. Are you growing in your relationship with Christ so that you are becoming the people of God? As you look back over the recent past, are you more gentle and more patient with those around you? Are you becoming more hungry and passionate about Jesus?
5. For those who follow Jesus, we are called to join Him on mission. Invite the Lord to come and give you the strength that you need to tell you what He is calling you to, so that you would you surrender that part of your life to Him. If you feel God calling you to come alongside our NextGen Ministry, [click here](#) to let them know.