

Reputedly Alive, but Almost Dead

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[0 : 0 0] It's good to worship with you guys. Please turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Revelation, chapter three. This is the last book of the Bible. If you don't have a Bible, please raise your hand. We'd love to give you a copy that you could have then take home with you.

We started this series a couple months ago. We're in chapter three today, verses one through six. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word.

Father, your word is truth. And you are good.

Your love endures forever. You are worthy of all our praise and the praise of every nation, tribe, and tongue, and people. We ask that you would address us from your word again.

Speak to us with the word that never returns void so that our hearts are spurred on to exalt your name, the name of your son, Jesus, so that we might be changed, become more like him, so that we might live with faith and hope and love in eager expectation of the hope that will be revealed to us at the second coming of our Lord Jesus.

[1 : 3 0] Wake us up so we might not be given to spiritual slumber, but make us alert, watchful, sober-minded.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you are able, please stand for the reading of God's word. Revelation chapter three, verses one to six.

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. 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.

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.

[2 : 4 9] 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. 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. He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. This is God's holy and authoritative word.

You may be seated. For those of you who are new to the church, we use a communication platform called Slack and on Slack earlier this week, I asked some of you guys questions about what was the most important thing and event that you missed due to oversleeping and I should have asked you guys for permission to share this beforehand, but you guys shared it on a public platform, so I'm taking my license and airing out your...

Aubrey mentioned that she overslept and missed her SAT exam. David Foreman missed his meeting with an advisor. Charlie Yang and Andrew Rimm missed a final presentation and a final exam in college, respectively.

Nathaniel Jenkins, is Nathaniel here? Yeah, he missed a human-powered flying engineering competition. It's a very geeky thing to miss there, but he's at MIT, so that's not surprising, for which he happened to have all of his university's tools in his car and he missed it.

[4 : 27] Sungmin confessed to oversleeping and missing church sometimes. God forgives you. Jen Cook missed her own birthday party that her friends and family were throwing for her because she overslept and missed her flight and thankfully, they had a good sense of humor about it and had the party anyway with framed pictures of her to carry around everywhere and she had photo evidence to prove it and one of Joseph Johnson's sisters missed their brother's wedding this summer because of a little nap that went a little too long and I thought that would take the cake and then Daniel Yuan responded and he said that he has missed multiple weddings due to oversleeping, including one for which he was in charge of the video audio equipment.

It's funny, yeah. I thought you guys would have some good stories and you guys did not disappoint so thanks for the sermon fodder there that Ed was quick to catch on to. Thankfully, you all seem to have recovered just fine from all those things.

Missed exams, missed classes, missed, you know. I think oversleeping and missing something is a familiar fear for most of us but there's a kind of slumber that you never recover from and that's spiritual slumber and I don't mean that you can't recover from it now but rather if you die in that state then you don't recover.

There's no second chance after that. We are repeatedly warned throughout the New Testament that Jesus will come back like a thief and that's not to steal but to claim what is his own and when you come to claim what is your own that's not stealing that's redeeming and so he will come back to redeem but he will come like a thief in the sense that he will come unannounced.

No thief ever comes after announcing his coming because then the residents of the house will be ready and he will not be able to break in. He comes unannounced likewise Jesus will come unannounced and that's why we are repeatedly commanded throughout scripture to be alert and to be watchful to be awake.

[6 : 38] If we are found spiritually sleeping when the Lord returns there's no makeup tests. That's the end. It's the second death. The lake of fire because spiritual sleep is a metaphor for spiritual death as we see here in verses 1 to 2.

You have the reputation of being alive but you are dead. Wake up and strengthen what remains and is about to die. Our eternal life is at stake in us being awake.

And so I urge you to listen to this passage and what Jesus has to say to us in this letter because our lives depend on it. This passage teaches us that we must wake up and keep what we have heard and received so that our names are never blotted out from the book of life.

And first we're gonna talk about the one who has the spirit of life. Secondly, the church that is alive in name only. And third, we'll talk about the promise of life for those who keep Christ's name. Now, first let's look at the one who has the spirit of life in verse 1.

That's how Jesus introduces himself in slightly different terms in this letter to the angel of the church in Sardis. He says, the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

[7 : 57] The seven spirits of God is alluding back to chapter 1, verse 4, which introduced the sender of these letters to the seven churches in Asia and it was a Trinitarian formula. He said, grace and peace to you from the one who is and who was and who is to come.

That's the father. And from the seven spirits before the throne, that's the Holy Spirit. And from Jesus Christ, that's the son. So the Trinity is the author of this book and of these letters in particular to the seven churches in Asia Minor.

But the expression seven spirits is a little confusing, right? Because we're used to thinking about the Holy Spirit being one. And that's true because Ephesians 4, 4 to 5 says, there is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call.

One Lord and one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all. So there is the oneness of God and the oneness of the Spirit is actually the basis for unity in the church.

So there can't be more than one spirit. And John actually knows this and you can see this later in verse 6 when it says, he who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches in the singular.

[9 : 08] He knows that there's only one Holy Spirit. What's going on here then is John using the number seven symbolically as he frequently does throughout the book of Revelation. Because God completed the work of creation in seven days, the number seven comes to represent in the rest of Scripture the fullness or completeness of something.

And so other translations like the NIV or the CSB have a footnote after the seven spirits to explain that it means sevenfold spirit and I think that's a good translation.

The expression seven spirits conveys the immensity of God. His fullness, His omnipresence. He fills all in all.

He's everywhere. Where shall I go from your spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to the heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, in the realm of the dead, you are there.

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there, your hand shall lead me. God's presence is full, immense. It is everywhere and inescapable.

[10 : 15] And that meaning is later confirmed in Revelation 5, verse 6, which says that Jesus, the Lamb of God, has seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

So the seven spirits are the seven eyes of God sent out into all the earth to observe everything in every corner of the earth. This is a particularly appropriate way for Jesus to introduce Himself in this letter to the church in Sardis because the church in Sardis has the reputation of being alive but are dead.

and Jesus is uniquely aware of that because He sees everything. He's the one who has the seven spirits. The church in Sardis might be really good at faking it but they can't fool Jesus who has the seven spirits and searches both the surfaces and the deeps and sees through the facades and perceives things as they really are.

This expression is also appropriate because the church in Sardis is about to die as it says in verse 2. Their lamp on the seven golden lampstands which represent the seven churches according to Revelation 1.20 that lamp is about to die out.

Their flame is just barely burning like a smoldering wick and what's the fire that burns in these churches? We know from other parts of scripture that Jesus baptizes us with Holy Spirit and fire.

[11 : 47] It's the fire of the Holy Spirit that burns in these churches. That's why Revelation 4.5 says, Before the throne of God were burning seven torches of fire which are the seven spirits of God.

So, the spirit of God is described all throughout the Old and the New Testaments as the one who imparts life. Paul calls him the spirit of life. Romans 8.2 John says in 6.63 that it is the spirit who gives life.

So, it's the flame of the spirit of God that's about to go out in this church flickering precariously. So, to whom should they turn? Of course, the one who has the seven spirits.

He's the one who can fan that flame. make them alive again. So, Jesus is the one who is the life-giving spirit as it says in 1 Corinthians 15.45 and he is here inviting the church in Sardis.

Wake up! Repent! Turn to me! Turn back to me because I am the source of all spiritual life and I can make you live again. I can make you burn again.

[13 : 03] But the fact that Christ has the authority to impart the spirit also means that he has the authority to remove. And the next part of Jesus' self-identification is a reminder of that.

The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. We were told explicitly earlier in chapter 1 verse 20 that the seven stars represent the angels of the seven churches.

The angels are, these angels, seven angels are the representatives, heavenly representatives of these seven churches on earth. So then the fact that Jesus has the seven stars in his right hand, as said in chapter 1, is a symbol of his authority and sovereignty.

He's full control over all of these churches. It doesn't matter to Jesus that the church in Sardis has a sparkling reputation among their peers.

What matters is Jesus' assessment, Jesus' judgment, judgment, and Jesus says that they are dead. So this is the warning.

[14 : 08] I am the one who is in charge of the book of life. Repent and confess my name. So that's Jesus, the one who has the spirit of life.

And Jesus has to remind the church in Sardis of this because they were a church that is alive in name only. That's my second point. It says at the end of verse 1, I know your works.

You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. The word reputation is the same word in the Greek for the word name. So they have the name of being alive, but they are dead.

That's a key word in this passage actually. That word name occurs four times throughout this passage, this letter to the church in Sardis. So in other words, these are a church full of nominal Christians, Christians in name only.

They're not completely spiritually dead, because we know from verse 2 that they are about to die, so it's hyperbolic, the part of verse 1 that says you are dead. They are dying, not quite dead yet, but if you lived in the first century and you met a fellow Christian while you were traveling who was from Sardis, and they say, oh yeah, I'm a member of the church in Sardis, you would have been impressed.

[15 : 25] Oh, wow. You would have been a church in Sardis. I've heard great things about that church. That was their reputation, but they were in reality about to die.

There are many churches in the world that are like that, like the church in Sardis, alive in name only, and there can be many reasons for that. a church might have the reputation of being alive because of its traditionalism, because it's an ancient church with impressive cathedrals and sparkly vestments.

I'm not discounting tradition here. I actually value tradition. I think it's important. Tradition preserves the experience and wisdom of the old, but traditionalism preserves tradition for tradition's sake.

As 20th century church historian Yaroslav Pelikan once said, tradition is the living faith of the dead. Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. And I suppose I should add, it is traditionalism that gives tradition such a bad name.

Antiquity and traditionalism alone are no signs of spiritual life. As Jesus says in Mark 7, 13, they make void the word of God by their tradition.

[16 : 47] Some churches have the reputation of being alive because of their experientialism or emotionalism, because of the therapeutic or cathartic experiences that they provide, whether that's through interpersonal accountability sessions or topical sermons that are geared toward meeting people's felt needs or the emotional release of exuberant concert-like musical or theatrical production or performance or the performance of charismatic miracles.

But if you win people to Christ with such experiences, then you will win them to such experiences. And that's what they'll want over and over again.

Seeking one subjective experiential high after another. instead, we need to turn to the person of Jesus Christ so that our assurance does not rest on these other things, but this ever-fluctuating rollercoaster of emotions and experiences, but rather on the bedrock of who Christ is and what he has done for us.

In Luke 11, when the crowds were increasing because of his miraculous signs, Jesus denounced the generation, saying, this generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah, and that's referring to his death and resurrection on the third day.

A church might elicit woos and wows with their spectacular performances and signs, but those experiences fade. Only the word of God stands forever.

[18 : 24] Some churches have the reputation of being alive because of their formalism. Everyone wears their best Sunday clothes on Sunday and puts on their best Sunday smiles and have their polite Sunday lines memorized to a T.

God is good all the time. I'm doing better than I deserve. I'm a sinner saved by grace. These are all good and true things, and I hope all of you say them, but in a formalistic church, they don't mean it when they say it.

Their faith is a formality. They have perfect attendance, but all their Christian activities are merely boxes to check off their to-do list. They don't have a vital, personal relationship with God, and so on the inside, in the privacy of their lives, they're full of all kinds of sin.

They're hypocrites, as Jesus said. in Matthew 23, 27, whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

Some churches have the reputation of being alive because of their activism. Activism is not bad in and of itself, but there are churches that are so consumed with doing justice and loving kindness that they don't have any time to proclaim the gospel and make disciples.

[19 : 52] their church members have those yard signs that says, no human is illegal, and love is love, and kindness is everything. They're so consumed with meeting people's felt needs that they've lost sight of what the Bible says is their greatest need.

They're so focused on saving the world that they've forgotten that God already sent his only son into the world to save it.

Jesus says in John 6, 26, that many people followed him not because of him, the bread of life, but because they ate their fill of the loaves. They came for the food that perishes and not for the food that endures to eternal life.

Likewise, there are many churches nowadays who cater to peoples who want their fill of the loaves and offer food that perishes but without offering them Jesus, the bread of life who nourishes unto eternal life.

some churches have the reputation of being alive because of their legalism. You have never found a group of people who seem so serious and so zealous for God.

[21 : 11] You think you're serious about following God? These guys take it to the nth degree. You think you're a good Christian because you attend Sunday worship every week? These guys do dawn prayer every prayer every day, Wednesday night prayer and CG and Sunday morning and evening services and they're doing personal devotions.

Bible reading prayer every day, maybe for twice as long as many of you. You think you're a good Christian because you haven't had sex before marriage? These guys don't even kiss before marriage.

These are not bad practices in and of themselves but because they think it's their own theological rightness or their own moral righteousness that make them acceptable to God and not the atoning work of Christ on the cross.

They are ultimately depending on themselves and not on Christ and that leads to spiritual pride when they're keeping up with their spiritual disciplines but it leads to spiritual despair when they fail and fall short.

They have no humility before God and other believers because they have not received for themselves the grace and mercy of God. they have trouble extending that mercy to others.

[22 : 30] They are like the scribes and the Pharisees who tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faithfulness. We don't know exactly what was going on with the church in Sardis and these are only a partial list of possible problems but we do know that they were spiritually dead and so Jesus exhorts them this way in verse 2, wake up and strengthen what remains and is about to die for I have not found your works complete in the sight of God.

Remember Jesus said in verse 1, I know your works and this is what he knows about their works, that their works are not complete in the sight of God. Recall that with each letter written to the seven churches of whom Jesus is the author, Jesus evaluates the spiritual condition of these churches and usually that evaluation is a combination of commendation and correction.

Some churches only receive commendation, two of them, and the evaluation always begins with Jesus saying I know, usually I know your works and that's usually followed first by the commendations but not the church in Sardis.

It goes straight to corrections because there's not much to commend about this church at all. The only redeeming factor about the church in Sardis is that not all of them are like this.

A few of them, verse 4 says, have not yet soiled their garments. But the rest, they have the reputation of being alive but are dead.

[24 : 04] They have no works for which Jesus can commend them. That's really sad to see because that means they have no toil or patient endurance or intolerance of evil.

intolerance of evil like the church in Ephesus that Jesus commended them for. They have not endured tribulation or poverty like the church in Smyrna for the name of Christ. They have not held fast to Christ's name in the midst of deadly persecution like the church in Pergamum.

They have no love and no faith and service and patient endurance like the church in Thyatira. They lack these works. This is a church that has the name of being alive but are dead.

Apart from this, we're not told exactly what the spiritual malady of the church of Sardis was. They don't seem to be dealing with the Nicolaitans and Jezebel and sexual morality and idolatry like the churches in Pergamum and Thyatira.

But nonetheless, their critique, this critique is so severe because their condition is so deficient.

[25 : 09] deficient. There's a level of entanglement and defilement because apart from the few mentioned in verse 4, they've all soiled their garments. But I do think we can infer a little bit more about what they might be struggling with by looking at what Jesus commands them to do in verse 3.

He says, Remember then what you received and heard. Keep it and repent. The pair of verbs, receive and hear, most often occur in the New Testament together to refer with the object as the word of God.

Hear the word of God. Receive the word of God. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 2.13, when you receive the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of man, but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Similarly, the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 talks about those who hear the word and immediately receive it with joy, at least for a time. So when Jesus is exhorting the church in Sardis to remember the word of God, remember what you received and what you heard, that's the gospel of the word of Christ.

Remember that and keep it, hold on to it, because presumably they are not keeping it. It seems like the church in Sardis is not bearing witness to Jesus in any way. I think this condition, that this is what is going on, is confirmed later by what Jesus promises to do to those who repent and conquer in verse 5.

[26 : 41] 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.

Jesus said in Matthew 10 that if his disciples confess his name before men, that he will himself confess their name before the father and his angels. I think that's what Jesus is referring to here in this letter to the church in Sardis.

It seems like the issue is that the church in Sardis is not confessing openly the name of Christ. They've gone incognito. They've blended in so well to society that they're really Christians in name only.

Nothing stands out about them as Christians. But how could these Christians in Sardis manage to do that without partaking in Roman idolatry like these other churches that Jesus called out explicitly?

One way that they could do that would have been to blend in with the Jews and to come under the auspices of the Jewish synagogue. The Jewish community in Sardis was one of the largest and most prominent in Asia Minor.

[27 : 52] They boasted, Sardis boasted the largest Jewish synagogue built in the ancient world that could seat almost a thousand people. The Jewish community was very well established in Sardis and they were acknowledged by the Roman governing authorities because of their antiquity and the Romans tolerated the Jews despite their refusal to worship the emperor as long as they honor the emperor.

So if the Christians in Sardis, many of whom would have been Jewish by their ethnic background anyway because most Christians, converts back then were Jewish at first, they could have just fit in with the Jews, go into the synagogue, don't ruffle any feathers, don't make anyone mad, then they would have been able to fly under the radar and avoid all kinds of persecution and maybe even idolatry.

But that required a level of unacceptable compromise. It required that they soil their garments, that they don't confess the name of Jesus. This is actually not unlike what we call the insider movement among some Muslims.

There are Muslims who supposedly come to faith in Jesus but then continue to identify as Muslim. They still observe Islamic religious and legal practices, remain in the mosque as their social community.

They regard Muhammad as a true prophet of God and Quran as a true scripture of God. They call themselves messianic Muslims. But they're like the Jews that John 12 describes who believed in Jesus but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess his name so that they would not be put out of the synagogue for they love the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

[29 : 53] The lack of confrontation with the sinful world is sure evidence of our complicity with the sinful world. But this kind of compromise doesn't occur merely in foreign missions contexts.

It occurs right here in the U.S. Do you profess the name of Christ in your life? Do your coworkers know that you're a Christian?

When they ask you about your weekend do you mention that you went to church? Is your lifestyle distinguishable from theirs in any way?

Do you talk differently from them or are you as vulgar and foul-mouthed as they are? Do you date people differently or do you have little regard for God-given physical boundaries before marriage like the rest of society?

Do you think differently from them or is the way you process current events and cultural trends identical with the way with the world that doesn't know the gospel and doesn't have the wisdom of God from his word?

[31 : 01] Does the way you spend your time and money look any different from your unbelieving friends? When your friends bash Christianity or take the Lord's name in vain do you say anything?

You just hush up and just blend in. There are people who have not been transformed by the Spirit from the inside out and are only Christians in name only.

And in a group this large it's likely that there's some of you here. Spiritually asleep. And Jesus says, wake up.

Strengthen what remains and is about to die for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. Whether we die first or Jesus comes first, that hour will come when we don't anticipate it.

But Jesus doesn't leave them only with that grim prospect. He ends with the promise of life for those who keep Christ's name in verses 4 to 5.

[32 : 10] He says, yet you still have a few names in Sardis. People who have not soiled their garments and they will walk with me in white for they are worthy.

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. Note the repetition of the word garments here. It's those who have not soiled their garments that will later receive will be clothed in white garments.

So this doesn't mean that we are saved by our good works because those two garments are not the same. If we justify ourselves by our own good works then we would not need new white garments to receive because we'd already be clothed in white.

But they're not the same. On the one hand we see later in Revelation 19.8 that the church, the bride of Christ, will be ready for the marriage of the Lamb because it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen bright and pure.

[33 : 13] For the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. So on the one hand, in a sense in which our righteous deeds do adorn us for the future and they are pleasing to God.

So that's one sense true. However, it's not our righteous deeds that justify us and we see that clearly in Revelation 7 which says that those who belong to Christ from every nation will be clothed in white robes.

And how did those robes get white? Revelation 7.14 says they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Even the most righteous among us cannot get the stain of sin out of our robes.

Many of you have tried that and know how futile that is. The only way to do that, only way to have clean robes is to wash them by the blood of the Lamb.

It's only those that wash their robes by the blood of the Lamb that can do righteous deeds that are pleasing to God because without faith it is impossible to please Him. It's Christ's once and for all sacrifice on the cross that enables us to be living sacrifices, pleasing and acceptable to God.

[34 : 29] Jesus was the sacrificial lamb that was slain to make atonement for our sins and it's because His blood was shed in death in our place that our sin-stained robes can be washed clean, as white as snow.

And it's as those who have put their faith in Jesus, as those who have been justified, that we ought to confess the name of the one who saved us.

Until that glorious day when we'll be clothed with the white garments of the bride of Christ. Let's look at the rest of the promise in verse 5. I will never blot out His name out of the book of life.

I will confess His name before my Father and before His angels. If the church in Sardis repents of being a Christian in name only and then in reputation only and if they start to live like those few names in Sardis that are not yet soiled their garments, then their name will never be blotted out of the book of life and Jesus will confess His name before His Father and before His angels.

See, the repetition of the word name there, the converse is also true. If you do not confess the name of Jesus before men, He will not confess your name before the Father. If you do not keep the name of Jesus Christ until the end, then your name will not be found in the book of life.

[35 : 58] To your dismay. Scripture consistently teaches us that there are people in the church who claim to be Christians and may seem to be Christians even to others around them, but who nevertheless prove that they were never true Christians by failing to persevere in faith until the end.

1 John 2, 19 describes them this way. They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.

But they went out, that it might be complained that they are not of us. The Jews around the time Revelation was written had a curse that they regularly uttered about Christians.

And it went like this. And I know some of you guys have Jewish backgrounds, so I hope you're not thinking that I'm...

Our Savior is Jewish. This is not an indictment of Jews in general. Rather, this is just the reality on the ground. And of course, Christians have sinned past as well.

[37 : 11] But this is a curse that the Jews regularly uttered in that time. It says, may the Nazarenes and the Minim suddenly perish, and may they be blotted out of the book of life. The Nazarenes is a reference to Christians, and the Minim can also be a reference to Christians.

It refers to all those who separate themselves from the Jewish community, the Jewish synagogue. Perhaps the church in Sardis feared that curse. They tried to blend in with the Jews, not cause any trouble.

Because they didn't want to be blotted out of the book of life. But Jesus assures them, if you are cursed by men for confessing my name, and if your name is blotted out of the synagogue, and out of the registry of your community because of your allegiance to me, if you become a social outcast because of your faith in me, I will never blot out your name for the book of life.

I will confess your name before the Father and before his angels. And that's the most precious promise we can have as God's people.

At the final judgment, during that heavenly roll call, God's not going to be just rummaging around and I don't see your name.

[38 : 44] He's not going to turn to us and say, I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers. Jesus will confess your name.

If you hold on to your faith in Jesus, Jesus will confess your name before the Father. He will say, Sean, he's mine. Pay for him with my blood.

And we'll get to enter into the joy of our master. Don't you want to be identified with Christ? Imagine your very name on the lips of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Your very name on the lips of our Heavenly Father saying, come. If Christ is rejected by our society, let us be rejected with him.

If Christ is ridiculed by our society, let us be ridiculed with him. For if we confess his name here on earth, he will confess our name there in heaven. Some of you are spiritually dead because you have never put your faith in Jesus.

[39 : 56] Some of you think that you're Christians but are spiritually asleep and about to die. But the solution for both is the same. Repent of your sins. Turn in faith to the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

He is the one who has the life-giving spirit of God and if you turn to him and you cling to him, he can make even the bone-dry dead alive again.

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you. Let's pray. Yes, Father, wake us all up and make us alert and watchful.

Thank you for taking our soiled garments and giving us new white garments washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Help us not to lose the wonder of what you have done for us so that joyfully we confess the name of Jesus in all of our lives until the end of our lives.

[41 : 49] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.