
The Dead Church (The Walking Dead)

Witnessing the Church of Jesus

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Sermon: Witnessing the Church of Jesus: The Dead Church (The Walking Dead)

Current Series Messages:

- Theme Scripture: Matthew 16: ***18And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***
- Subject: **The Church of Love** (Remembering, Returning, Restoring)
- Subject: **The Church of Persecution** (Suffering for Righteousness, Kingdom, Christ)
- Subject: **The Worldly Church** (Enemies Bearing Gifts, Offering Help, Bringing Peace)
- Subject: **The Substitute Church** (Appointed or Anointed, Seduced or Holy, Defiled or Sanctified)

Lesson Text

Revelation 3:1-3 (KJV)¹***And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. ²Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. ³Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.***

Matthew 7:21-23 (KJV)²¹***Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.***

James 2:14–17 (AV)¹⁴***What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ¹⁵If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? ¹⁷Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.***

James 2:26 (AV)²⁶***For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.***

Introduction

Jesus establishes His Church with Power and Authority in Matthew 16:18; but in Revelations, the Church has digressed (strayed, deviated, and departed) from Christ's initial purpose.

1. The Church at Ephesus (The Church that had left its First Love)
2. The Church at Smyrna (The Church that was willing to Suffer for Christ's Sake)
3. The Church at Pergamos (The Worldly Church)
4. The Church at Thyatira (The Substitute Church that's lost its Authority)
5. The Church at Sardis (The Dead Church)
6. The Church at Philadelphia (The Revived Church)
7. The Church at Laodicea (The Worthless Church)

Now we will look at the 5th Church in Sardis which Christ had identified as a Dead Church.

Revelation 3: ¹ **I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.**

This passage speaks to the difference in how man sees himself and how God sees him. They saw themselves as alive, but God saw them as dead.

This church was in the ancient capital of the rich and powerful kingdom of Lydia. They were undoubtedly wealthy, powerful, popular, upscale, had a lot of members, and highly thought of. Their name said they were alive, but God said they were dead.

So how can the Church think it's alive and Jesus say it's dead at the same time? Because man's definition of life and God's definition of life are different; same word, but different dictionary.

With man, Life means accumulation, wealth, the crowd, growth, abundance; but with God, Life means Jesus!

John 14:6 (AV)⁶ Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

So if there is no Relationship with Jesus, then our Works are Dead. If there is no Works in Jesus, then our Faith is Dead. And if there is no Awareness of Jesus, then our Spirit is Dead.

Series and Sermon: Witnessing the Church of Jesus: The Dead Church (The Walking Dead)

“Walking in Dead Work, Dead Faith, and Dead Spirit”

I. Walking in Dead Works (No Relationship)

Revelation 3: ¹ **And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.**

Just because you're working, doesn't mean that you're alive; “Dead Works”!

Jesus declares that this Church is dead. Why? Because their works were dead.

Matthew 7: ²² **Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?** ²³ **And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

“I never knew you”, there was not relationship

To Walk in Live Works, there must be Devine Relationship

There must be a relationship with Jesus

Matthew 22:37 (AV)³⁷ **Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

There must be a relationship with the Word

Psalms 1:1–2 (AV)¹ **Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth**

in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psalms 119:11 (AV)¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

There must be a relationship with the Truth

John 8:32 (AV)³² **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

II. Walking in Dead Faith (No Works)

Revelation 3: ²**Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.**

Just because you believe, doesn't mean that you're alive; "Dead Faith"!

Jesus says although they were in the Church, they were "ready to die" (almost dead). Why? Because their faith was dead ("not found thy works perfect before God").

James 2: ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

We can have faith, but our faith can be dead ("Useless" – Doesn't Work).

James 2: ¹⁴ What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?

Anybody can believe, but without works to back up that faith, it won't work.

James 2:19 (AV)¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

To Walk in Live Faith, there must be Righteous Works

Romans 6:1–2 (AV)¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Faith without Works is believing with Sin; Faith with Works is believing with Righteous Living.

Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that **cometh to God** must believe that he is, and *that* he is a **rewarder of them** that diligently seek him.

Two keys to Live Faith: Come & Reward!

- Come: You can't just have faith, you have to come; that is, you have to work!
- Reward: This is payment; you don't get paid for believing, you get paid for working.

Matthew 11:²⁸ **Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

²⁹ **Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.** ³⁰ **For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.**

Revelation 22:12 (AV)¹² **And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

III. Walking in Dead Spirit (No Awareness)

Revelation 3: ³Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

The Church has become the Walking Dead and must Wake Up!

- **To Walk in Live Works, there must be Devine Relationship**
- **To Walk in Live Faith, there must be Righteous Works**
- **To Walk in Live Spirit, there must be Godly Watch**

Just because you're walking, doesn't mean that you're alive; "Dead Spirit"!

James 2:26 (AV)²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

A Dead Spirit means that there is no awareness of what's going on spiritually!

A lot of people and churches are walking, but their Spirit is dead. Why? They are not watching.

Without the Spirit of God, we cannot see the enemy!

John 10:10 (AV)¹⁰ The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

We cannot see our Love being stolen, we cannot see our Joy being killed, we cannot see our Peace be destroyed.

The enemy is stealing, killing, and destroying our Church; our Works, our Faith, and our Spirit

To Walk in Live Spirit, there must be Godly Watch

1 Peter 5:8 (KJV)⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)⁸ Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour.

Matthew 25: ¹³Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

"I see God working it out for me!"

Romans 8:26–28 (AV)²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: The Dead Church (The Walking Dead))

Lesson Text

Revelation 3:1-6, Matthew 7:21-23, James 2:14–17, 26

Sermon Outline

- I. Walking in Dead Works (No Relationship)
- II. Walking in Dead Faith (No Works)
- III. Walking in Dead Spirit (No Awareness)

Questions

I. Getting to Know “Me”

1. What insights, principles, or challenges did you receive from the sermon notes?
2. How would you describe yourself to someone on the phone who has never met you?

II. Into the Bible

1. *2 Corinthians 5:17 AMPC, “Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!”*. What traits should a new creation in Christ demonstrate? Please provide scriptural proof.
2. In James 2, Abraham is cited as having living faith in cooperation with his works: *James 2:21-22 AMPC, “Was not our forefather Abraham [shown to be] justified (made acceptable to God) by [his] works when he brought to the altar as an offering his [own] son Isaac? You see that [his] faith was completed and reached its supreme expression [when he implemented it] by [good] works.”* Since Abraham was stopped prior to actually offering his son, when was Abraham justified? Explain.
3. Jesus came that we may have life and have it more abundantly. Define abundant life and provide three scriptures that assure believers of that abundant life in Christ.

III. Life Application

1. In an individual believer’s life, how can he or she recognize that a loss of divine relationship, of faith-filled works or of spiritual awareness may be occurring?
2. What practical steps will you take in order to maintain spiritual life and health?

Prayer

I. Prayer Request:

II. Personal Prayer: