

The Alive Church!

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **What an amazingly alive weekend it has been as we are just coming off a 24-hour Burn Worship and prayer weekend!** People came together for one purpose—to worship our Lord and King, and to seek His face for needs around the world. Children worshipped and prayed during our children’s prayer set. Lives were touched! Worshipped ascended before God as a sweet incense. The people of God hung out together in koinonia fellowship!
- B. **The Church—Jesus’ bride, is alive and well!** Throughout centuries since the birth of the Church on the day of Pentecost, there has been a called-out group of people who have kept Jesus at the center of their daily lives. **He is their focus continually, no matter what happens around them!**

II. JESUS’ CHURCH IS A PREPARED BRIDE

- A. **John the revelator made an amazing prophetic declaration that the Church will eventually become a prepared Bride (Rev. 19:7).** The greatest corporate miracle in history is the transformation of the Church of the last days from spiritual compromise (Rev. 2 & 3) into a “prepared Bride” walking in the first commandment of loving God and being spiritually alive.
- B. The biblical storyline includes far more than a great end-time revival. It includes the Father raising up a prepared Bride for His worthy Son. We should never lose sight of Jesus as a Bridegroom King coming for His wife (the Church – the bride of Christ) – [Eph. 5:25-27].

III. SETTING OUR LOVE ON GOD AS OUR PRIMARY FOCUS

- A. **We “set our love” on God by determining that the primary dream (purpose) of our life is to pursue God with all of our heart.** Other blessings—family, friendships, ministry, vocation, achievements—flow from loving God. We set our love upon God—which pleases His heart!¹⁴“Because he has set his love [heart] upon Me, therefore I will deliver him.” (Ps. 91:14)
- B. **In Revelation chapters 2&3, Jesus exhorted three churches with the primary message to love Him with all their heart.** They had drifted into spiritual dullness without being aware of it. They represent three common ways that believers slowly become spiritually dull and passive. We should examine our purpose in life and reflect on this.

IV. MARY OF BETHANY’S LIFE IS A MODEL OF A LIFE ALIVE IN GOD (LK. 10:42)

- A. **Jesus highlighted Mary of Bethany’s life as a model of a vibrant spiritual life alive in God.** Her lifestyle is the way to overcome the spiritual dullness mentioned in Revelation 2-3. Mary is known forever for her extravagant love for Jesus.
- ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she...said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” ⁴¹Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha,

you are worried and troubled [bothered] about many things. ⁴²But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” (Lk. 10:39-42)

- B. **Martha, in her over-activism, neglected to connect with the One she was serving.** She did not know how to manage her time or emotions before the Lord. *She was always so busy DOING that she neglected just BEING seated at Jesus’ feet.* Mary, on the other hand, sat at Jesus’ feet to hear His word (Lk. 10:39).
- C. **Here, Jesus gave the “one thing needed” to help overcome spiritual dullness!** Those who embrace Mary’s lifestyle are far less vulnerable to drifting into spiritual dullness. Jesus honored the wisdom of her lifestyle by calling it *“that good part”*. **She is the picture of a life well lived, a life without regret in its response to Jesus.**

V. CALLED TO RETURN TO YOUR FIRST LOVE (REV. 2:4)

- A. **I love studying the book of Revelation, especially what Jesus said to the 7 churches.** Jesus corrected the church of Ephesus for neglecting to love Him in the way that they did during the great Ephesian revival (Acts 19). They drifted into spiritual dullness by over-activism—by working diligently without communing with God.
¹“To the angel of the church of Ephesus write...²I know your works...³you have persevered... and labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. ⁴...I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.” (Rev. 2:1-5)
- B. **Service is important, but it can never replace taking time to cultivate our love for and communion with Jesus.** They were contented to work *for* Him instead of working *with* Him. Jesus called them to respond in three ways to restore their first love—**to remember, repent, and act!**

VI. OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL DEADNESS (REV. 3:1-3)

- A. **The church in Sardis had a reputation for its dedication to Jesus, but had become spiritually dead.** They were dead or asleep in their spiritual life as evidenced by their lack of hunger for His Word and being weighed down with things like fear, shame, despair, depression, compromise, etc.
¹“To...the church in Sardis write, ‘...you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ²Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die...³Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent.” (Rev. 3:1-3)
- B. **They drifted into spiritual dullness by having confidence in the reputation of their past dedication**—in what others told them about how “alive” they were as they continued to neglect their prayer life. Jesus gave them five exhortations that would result in restoring their spiritual passion: to cultivate a lifestyle of watching and praying. **Jesus called His people to watch and pray** (Mt. 24:42-43; 25:13; 26:38-41; 27:36; Mk. 13:9, 33, 34, 35, 37; Lk. 12:38-39; 21:36; Rev. 16:15).
- C. **Are you alive in Jesus today?** Determine today to return to a lifestyle of extravagant devotion to Jesus. Don’t let others hinder you from what is *“That good thing”!* **Decide you want to be a part of the Alive Church through a lifestyle of worship and devotion to Him!**