

A WAKE UP CALL

**“I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.”
—REVELATION 3:1-2**

In the book of Revelation, there are seven letters from the Lord Jesus Christ given to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos. Each letter is addressed to a different church in the province of Asia Minor, now known as Turkey. In these letters, Jesus talks about aspects within the church that are displeasing to Him, and He gives them a wake up call.

We know from the early decades of the New Testament church that the longer a church has been around the more danger it becomes exposed to. There is the danger of moving from being outward looking to becoming inward looking; of being God-centered to human-centered; of being a living organism, that is the life of Jesus flowing through, to becoming a well-managed organization. There is also the danger of being Spirit-dependent to becoming self-sufficient, and the danger of moving our thinking from biblical revelation to human reasoning. A spiritually mature church would recognize these dangers, but a chronologically mature church may not, because they subtly and incrementally creep up on us.

Before Jesus’ ascension, He left His disciples with the very clear mandate of going into all the world to preach the Gospel. Do we, as a church, have equal clarity in our thinking, our planning, and envisioning that going into our communities, cities and around the

world with the Gospel is ultimately our goal? Is this the fundamental reason that we may grow in discipleship, and become better equipped to live lives that not only bring pleasure to God, but bring revelation of Him to those around us?

As in the early church, there are many activities going on today that can easily be explained in terms of personalities, abilities and programming, but there is no substitute for the life of Jesus Himself. When Christ is the source of life, there are much greater developments within the church in which the only explanation is that God is at work.

As much as abilities, programming and fellowship are necessary, they need to be tools for sharpening evangelism, and not a substitute for it. It is essential we remain outward looking with our focus and dependency on the life of Jesus; His agenda, His will, His empowering; His direction in every facet of the church. The end result flowing out of our ministry and into our communities, cities and around the globe is that people will come to know Christ and become partakers of His work in this world.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for your church all over the world, that it is always dependent on You, and alive and fresh with the working of your Spirit. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is the Spirit of Christ alive and active within the church I attend?