

THE  
**URGENT**  
CHURCH

*Revelation 3:1–4*

<sup>1</sup> “Write to the angel of the church in Sardis: Thus says the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. <sup>2</sup> Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before my God. <sup>3</sup> Remember, then, what you have received and heard; keep it, and repent. If you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you have no idea at what hour I will come upon you. <sup>4</sup> But you have a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their clothes, and they will walk with me in white, because they are worthy.

**Revelation 3:1-4**

# **A DYING CHURCH IS A CHURCH WHERE...**

- **The Spirit has departed.**
- **Emotional energy is absent.**
- **Physical strength is lost.**
- **There are other things...**  
controversy... division... loss of vision...  
lack of outreach... inwardly focused...  
lack of financial support.

***Thom Rainer, former CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, describes an urgent church "as being in a time of urgency where time is of the essence. If changes do not happen soon, very soon, these churches will die." Furthermore, He says "the pace of dying for a church will begin to accelerate unless that congregation makes some dramatic changes."***

# **RAINER'S NINE WARNING SIGNS OF AN URGENT (DYING) CHURCH**

- 1. We must stop our “y’all come” approach to outreach.**
- 2. We must stop celebrating our church as a place of unchanging stability and comfort in the midst of societal change.**
- 3. We must abandon the entitlement mentality.**

# **RAINER'S NINE WARNING SIGNS OF AN URGENT (DYING) CHURCH**

- 4. We must stop shooting our own.**
- 5. We must start doing.**
- 6. We must stop using biblical words in unbiblical ways.**
- 7. We must stop focusing on minors.**

# **RAINER'S NINE WARNING SIGNS OF AN URGENT (DYING) CHURCH**

- 8. We must stop wasting time in unproductive meetings, committees, and business sessions.**
- 9. We must become houses of prayer.**

# **IS SALEM AN URGENT CHURCH?**

- **Your attendance has declined.**
- **Your giving has declined.**
- **Your level of volunteers has decreased.**

# WHAT IS THE HOPE FOR AN **URGENT CHURCH?**

**First, the church must revive.**

It must “wake up.”

*Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before my God (v. 2).*

# WHAT IS THE HOPE FOR AN **URGENT CHURCH?**

**Second, the church must return.**

*Remember, then, what you have received  
and heard; keep it, and repent. (v.3).*