



**Dear ALIVE - Dear Church—Living Community
Sermon Discussion Questions – July 30, 2023**

Scripture Passages:

Revelation 2:13 (NLT) ¹³ “I know that you live in the city where Satan has his throne, yet you have remained loyal to me. You refused to deny me even when Antipas, my faithful witness, was martyred among you there in Satan’s city.

John 3:16 (NIV84) ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Revelation 1:4 (NIV84) ⁴ John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Revelation 1:10–17 (NIV84) ¹⁰ . . . I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet. . . ¹² I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. ¹⁷ . . . I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Revelation 3:1–6 (NIV84) “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to

die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you. ⁴ Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.

Warm Up:

This week, kids across Pickens and Anderson County will go back for another year of school. What is one of your favorite memories from when you were in school?

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom uses an excerpt from the book *Look to the Rock* by Alec Motyer. The excerpt says:

In the Old Testament, Jesus is predicted.

In the Gospels, Jesus is revealed.

In the Acts, Jesus is preached.

In the Epistles, Jesus is explained.

In the Revelation, Jesus is expected.

What can we learn about scripture through this excerpt? How can you see an overarching theme of the scripture pointing to Jesus?

2. Read Revelation 1:10-17. What can we learn about Jesus in this? How does this passage show Jesus' majesty and authority?
3. Pastor Tom made the point that the local church matters to God; therefore, it should matter to us. Why do you think the local church matters to God? Why does the local church matter to you?

4. Excerpt from Pastor Tom's message:

The essence of a church is not its programs or its buildings or its reputation or its doctrinal purity —as important as that is. The essence of a church is its spiritual life.

What do you think it means to be spiritually alive? What does it mean to be transformed spiritually?

5. Read Revelation 3:2-4. What does it mean to wake up spiritually? How can someone wake up spiritually?

6. Excerpt from Pastor Tom's message:

Maybe we aren't choosing a way that is wrong, but we are entertaining ways that might lead to the wrong. Nobody starts out making the biggest mistake of their lives, it's gradual, little decisions along the way.

How do you see this in your own life? What can you do to refrain from entertaining ways that lead to wrong?

Next Steps:

The Bible doesn't offer recipes, but it does offer heart positions. Jesus says, remember what you received from me, what you heard about me. Remember forgiveness and how you felt when you first met me.

Remember grace and how you were, even for a moment, free from shame and guilt. Remember love with no conditions and what you experienced the first time you realized you were loved in that way. Remember what it felt like to be held by the author of grace.

Go back and remember what you gave your heart to and obey it. Obey what you learned. Remember your desire to be pleasing to God, to walk with God, and to be in right relationship. Obey the call to holiness and reject the desires of your heart that are not pleasing to God. Get rid of the small compromises where you have fallen asleep and wake up in your walk with me, make right decisions!

And repent—rethink how you think about everything today. Rethink how you think about the compromises in your life or the decisions you are making or the trajectory you are on. Rethink about areas where you have fallen asleep, become lax, and repent.

As you read this list of things we need to remember, which one sticks out to you the most? Where have you fallen asleep and need to wake up and repent? What practical steps can you take to be sure you don't fall asleep again?