

Revelation 3:1-6 Letter to the church in Sardis.

Title: Really Alive

Sermon outline:

What does it mean to be really alive?

In a biological sense it means things like breathing, moving, growing, reproducing ...

In a spiritual sense it means things like worshipping, learning and caring, serving others, against injustice

Setting of passage

One of letters at the beginning of Revelation. Encouragement and challenge

Written to church in Sardis

Capital of Lydia. Important city. (cf Basingstoke)

Good transport links (cf M3)

Leisure complex (cf Basingstoke Leisure Centres)

Acropolis (cf Festival Place)

Impressive synagogue (cf church buildings)

Stream with gold dust (cf wealthy people)

Message of passage

v1 I know your deeds. You have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead.

God can see what is really happening in our lives and in the life of the church.

What it looks like on the outside (alive) may not be what is really happening (dead or dying)

V2 Wake up.

Some people wake up slowly and gradually

Some people wake up because they become aware of what is happening around them

Some people wake up suddenly because God speaks to them

Doesn't matter how you wake up, but important that you do and recognize what is really happening and whether you are alive or dead

V2 Strengthen what remains and is about to die.

Plants need water to keep them alive. What are the things in your church and life that need watering?

Good things that could become even better if you watered them.

V3 Remembering what we have received and heard, holding it fast and repenting.

e.g. of orphanages in America, that had to remember what they were really set up for and make significant changes so they could care for children today.

What is our core purpose, that we need to remember?

What have we added round the edges, and allowed to become our core purpose, that we need to let go of?

Encouragement

V4 A few people who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, for they are worthy. Their names are in the book of life, and will stay there.

Some people are alive. We have a choice whether or not this is us.

The letter ends, like each of the letters - "Whoever has ears, let them hear."