



The Church in Sardis

Week Five

Look Back at Last Week

- On Sunday, April 28, Pastor Curtis preached on the Thyatira church whose members were influenced by a cultural focus on work as family, social connection, and religion. What spiritual danger comes from this emphasis on work as primary identity? How much is your identity bound up in your work?
- How does the fact that work is pre-Fall shape the Christian perspective of work?
- What do you recall about Pastor Curtis' explanation of the "Two Chapter Gospel" and the "Four Chapter Gospel"? Discuss your "history" with each of these.

Read Aloud

Passage for this week: **REVELATION 3:1-6.**

Head | 15–20 Minutes

OBSERVE THE TEXT AND THE AUTHOR'S MAIN POINTS

1. How does the external reputation of the church in Sardis contrast with its true spiritual condition?
2. What role did the city's cultural environment play in shaping the spiritual challenges faced by the church?
3. How does Jesus' call to "wake up" and "strengthen what remains" apply to us individually and collectively as a church body?

Heart | 15–20 Minutes

ENVISION HOW THE TEXT—WHEN APPLIED—MIGHT TRANSFORM YOUR INNER LIFE IN TERMS OF YOUR THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS

1. This passage calls for a personal awakening and revival, leading to a transformative relationship with Christ that transcends cultural norms and external accolades. How can we ensure that our faith remains vibrant and authentic amid the pressures of our modern culture?
2. Discuss areas of spiritual life where you feel most in danger of complacency or spiritual decline.
3. The call to "remember" and "repent" prompts a deeper commitment to genuine discipleship, reclaiming the purity and vibrancy of our spiritual life. Discuss steps you can take to cultivate a deeper, more intimate relationship with Christ, reflecting the purity and vitality He offers.

Hands / 10 Minutes

APPLY THE TEXT BY MOVING FROM INWARD REFLECTION TO OUTWARD ACTION LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LIVE THE TEXT OUT IN OUR LIVES TO SERVE OTHERS

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Examining our spiritual life regularly through conversation and prayer with trusted and mature believers helps us grow and inspires faithfulness. What person or people in your life help you with this?
- Engaging in Scriptural study and meditation is a spiritual discipline. Responding to the call and living with fidelity towards Jesus can be confusing, but meditating on scripture deepens our understanding of God's truth and purposes for our lives. What regular Scripture study is part of your life?
- Seek accountability and discipleship relationships in a small group in the church to nurture spiritual growth and renewal. Discuss how your small group has helped you do this.

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Be attentive to the physical and spiritual needs of those around you, offering practical support and encouragement.
- Actively participate in community and church initiatives that promote spiritual renewal and transformation in your life and in the lives of those around you. One way is to **Volunteer for FPC Vacation Bible School** - June 10-14 - 9AM - 12 PM - The theme is SCUBA, diving into friendship with God. Be invitational: this is an opportunity to invite neighbors to experience the never-ending love of God! To volunteer, register at: fpchouston.org/ministries/children/vbs-2024/

Reaching Beyond

- **Alpha Prayer Points:** Pray for those currently involved in Alpha at FPC. Praise God that for the Thursday evening Alpha (April 11- May 23), the first three weeks have gone well. We praise God that attendance continues to be strong (40+seekers; 30+ volunteers). The Week 4 topic is "How Can I Have Faith?" Ask that God will enlighten the minds of the seekers so that many will respond positively to this question and encounter Jesus. Continue to pray for the volunteers to have stamina, good health, and clear schedules to be able to return weekly and show the love of Jesus to the guests. Finally, May 18 is the Retreat that will be held at FPC. Pray that all will come, and that it will be a meaningful experience. Thank you for your prayers!
- May 18, 9 am - 11 am, Volunteer training at The Crosswalk Center (2103 N. Main St./77009), a prison ministry that encourages and assists individuals as they prepare mentally, emotionally, and spiritually to re-enter society.
- May 23, 4 pm - The Landing - In this one hour visit, we will learn about their ministry to sex trafficking victims. To reserve a place, contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at mweir@fpchouston.org. For more information about FPC Mission Partners and volunteer opportunities go to fpchouston.org/serve/ways-to-serve/upcoming-opportunities.