

12.7.26 pm

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Date: 12 July 2026

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0:00] A warm welcome to the service this evening. I think I'll take the lectern and I'll take a walk to the back wall and preach from there.

! We'll begin this time of worship and we'll sing to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 23. Psalm 23. And with there being so many visitors today and with a few of our Gallup presenters being away, we're singing in English.

Psalm 23. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me the quiet waters by. We'll sing the whole of Psalm 23. And after we've sung, John McSween, one of our elders, will come and lead us in prayer in Gallup, please.

Psalm 23. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green.
He leadeth me the quiet waters by.

[1:31] My soul, he does, restore again. My soul, he does, restore again.

He is, I'll not want. He is, I'll not want. He is, I'll not want to lie in the past of righteousness.

Oh For love art with me and I brought And stop me come for sin My table, love, prosperity, share
In presence of my foes My head, love, cross with oil and noise And my cup overflows Goodness
and mercy all my life Shall surely follow me And in God's house forevermore My dwelling place
shall be

I will be here I will be here I will be here I will be here I will be here I will be here I will be here I will
be here I will be here I will be here I still won.

[4:43] I still won. I still won. I still won. I still won.

I still won. I still won. but still there is no doubt. The moment is still there.

The moment is still there. The moment is still there. The moment is still there. The moment is still there.

The moment is still there. The moment is still there. The moment is still there.

but still having a moment. but still having a moment but still having a moment but still having a moment but still having a moment but still having a moment Which is a crouching.

[illegible]

I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here.

I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here. I felt like I was still here.

I felt like I felt like I was still here. Take a moment. Take a moment. Take a moment.

Take a moment. Take a moment.

[7 : 53] but still still. but still still. The moment is still still. The moment is still still still. The moment is still still still still.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise. And we'll sing from Mission Praise 1116.

There is a higher throne than all this world has known. Where faithful ones from every tongue will one day come. Before the sun will stand. Made faultless through the land.

Believing hearts find promised grace. Salvation comes. We'll stand to sing in just a moment to God's praise. It is the higher road, The hope is proud, Our soul will make for us, For every time, Will one day come, Before the sun will stand, In hope is true, The love will be, In God's twin promise, The love is peace, Salvation God,

In heaven's eyes to sing, The love is not the day, The love is not the day, The love is not the day, The love is not the day, The love is not the day, The waves are high forevermore, And there we'll find our home A life before us, Lord We'll honor heaven and earth's joy Where we belong In white peace, shielded eye

[18:22] As blest and conquer die Who love beyond the shepherds' king Till we may lay In heaven's voices sing Their love does not bring To ever force the summer's joy Where great is our eyes All glory, first of God Strength, strength, and all the power To God our King Who reigns on high Forevermore I wish you could have seen Scott's face as I left the side door

On the only night he's ever not worn a tie Let's pray for a moment as we come back to this passage Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word We thank you, Lord Jesus, for these letters Letters from you to the churches in different parts of Asia Many years ago And yet letters that were intended to be Preserved and passed around Through the generations We thank you that this evening The application of the letter to the church in Sardis As fresh for us As fresh for us as it was for them So open our ears, we pray Help us to hear Help us to respond in faith Help us, we pray, to glorify you And we pray once more For every congregation that we are connected with We are conscious of many different fellowships

And as they meet in different places We thank you that we are part We are one small part of the vast church of Christ That crosses nations And that crosses generations We thank you that we have sang the truth That one day everyone who is in Christ Will stand before the throne As those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb Those who are trusting in Jesus We thank you for heaven We thank you for the promise Of a place that we can call An eternal home We thank you that in that place There will be no sin There will be no sadness There will be no tears There will be no sorrow We thank you that in that place There will be no Division There will be no quarrelling There will be no denominations But we will be all one In Christ Jesus And we pray that you would help us

Lord God In this world To seek to lift up the name of Jesus To live in fellowship with all your people Help us we pray to love one another And to seek to glorify your name Our chief end as the catechism reminds us Is to glorify God And we thank you that as we do that We know joy in this life And we will know joy That is eternal Hear our prayers Give us understanding As we open your word And we pray all this in Jesus' name Amen Revelation chapter 3 If you could have that open in front of you You'll find that helpful For those who are visiting This is part of a series In Revelation that we've been going through We've come to this letter tonight And this is a letter

It's part of a series of letters From Jesus Who is speaking through John the Apostle To the church in a place called Sardis So let's begin this evening By looking at the place First point is a rich city And if we were to look through All the letters that we have All the different locations The scholars tell us that Of all the places that Jesus wrote to In this section Sardis was the richest It was a rich city It was rich in terms of produce The ground was fertile It didn't look much like the base of Haras Sardis was located On a plain between two valleys So the ground was fertile And the location was convenient for trading There was much in the way of commerce That went on in Sardis

[23:38] So it was rich in terms of produce It was rich in terms of trade It was rich in terms of assets It was a city where there was gold The main river going through Sardis Was famous for its gold One historian said that It seemed that nature had conspired To pour riches onto this city It was a rich city In terms of produce and trade It was a rich city In terms of the gold The minerals that they were able to To just take from the river And the final way that Sardis was rich Was in terms of security The south of the city Was protected by a ridge of mountains The city itself Was built on one of the foothills Of that mountain range And it stood surrounded on three sides By cliffs that towered 1,500 feet above the valley

Anyone looking at Sardis Would say that it looked like a fortress And the residents of Sardis Felt like they were living Inside of a fortress So it was rich In terms of security It was rich In terms of economy It was rich In terms of natural resources So that's a little about the place And because the city Was so prosperous It was so rich It seemed to be so secure The people felt secure They weren't opening up their Their bank apps And going to the cash line machine Hoping that there was a Five pound left in the account They were well off people They didn't feel

Like they were vulnerable They were always under threat Of attack They felt quite secure In every way In fact they They seemed to feel so secure That they didn't really feel In need of God That seems to have been the problem In Sardis And that's always a danger Sometimes we think that It's when We are hit with poverty And trouble That we're going to be most Vulnerable But very often It's the opposite It's when things are going well For us in this world It's when We have enough money In the bank It's when Our health Seems to be holding up And we're actually Physically feeling Quite good It's when

Our relationships Are fairly steady It's when The business Is in profit And when our grades Are coming back As good That's sometimes When we can Lose that sense Of need of God And start to feel secure In and of ourselves And that That can happen Not just in a In a city It can happen Not just in a In an individual's life That can happen In a church I was thinking back A few years To when we As a congregation Had no money And no buildings No nothing There was such a A sense Of our need of God Because he was all we had And if we ever lose that

When we have buildings And we maybe have A lot of money In the bank If we ever Lose that Sense of need Of God There is danger Danger of Sardis syndrome A rich city That's the first point The second point Is a Reputable church Jesus is looking in To this church In Sardis And he's composed A letter And that letter Comes in the power Of the Holy Spirit The seven spirits Of God As we have Referenced in Verse 1 And to the angel Of the church In Sardis Write The words of him Who has the seven Spirits of God And the seven Stars So Jesus is writing It's coming in the power Of the Holy Spirit And what does Jesus Have to say to this church Well he begins by saying

[28 : 48] I know your works You have the reputation Of being Alive So Jesus Begins by Telling them That he knows What people are saying About the church In Sardis And other people As they spoke About the church In Sardis They were saying Good things This was a Reputable church This was a Church that Literally It had a good name The word in the Greek Is not reputation It's name This was a church That had a good name If someone asked you What church do you attend And you replied by saying Well I go to To Sardis They would say Well that's That's a good church Isn't it I hear good things About That church And if you were to Check the website Of the The Presbyterian church Of Sardis Or if you were to

Check the annual accounts And attend The AGM Likely you'd be impressed That's the kind of Church it was And Jesus says I I know your works I know what you're doing But you're doing it For your own name You're doing it For your own reputation Not for my name And so In that Presbytery of Asia When people Talked about Sardis They talked about The works That Sardis did Rather than Talking about The Saviour And the works That he did And there's a warning

For us here As A church And A warning For us As As individuals And this This hits Most forcefully Ministers Don't ever think That I'm Standing here Speaking And You know It's passing by me Nothing that comes From me Hasn't first Gone through me And so The warning Here It comes to A church It comes to Individuals It comes especially To ministers People like Scott and I When we work When we do Works It should Never be To promote Our own Name When we do A community Lunch Or a holiday Club Or

Any kind Of event It should Never be To lift up The name Of the Congregation It should Never be To lift up The name Of a minister It should Never be To lift up The name Of a denomination It should Always be In order To lift up The name Of Jesus We're going to Sing at the end His name Forever Shall Endure Long after Our names Are gone A rich city A reputable Church And the Third point Is a Rebuke Now again If we were To glance Back through The other Letters And look At the Introduction To the Letter To every Other church We would Note that There's always In the Introduction

Some words Of commendation And encouragement That Jesus Opens with But not With Sardis Jesus Begins With a Strong And striking Rebuke He says I know Your works You have The reputation Of being Alive But you're Dead And we Can only Imagine The shock And the Dismay That would Have filled The church In Sardis As they Heard the Assessment Of Jesus Remember

When this Letter Was first Heard This would Have been Read in Every church So this Wasn't A private Note This was a Letter That was Carried By John It was [33:50] Passed Around These churches And so All these Churches Heard What Jesus Had said About each Other And so For Sardis They were Probably Sitting Thinking Well I wonder What we're Going to Get When we're Doing this And we're Doing that We're doing The next Thing And everybody Speaks well Of us I wonder What Jesus Will say About us And Jesus Says I know Your works Half a Smile on Their faces You have The reputation Of being Alive Yes we Do But you're Dead And that Must have Just gone Right through Them And sent Shockwaves Through That congregation Because remember This was not A dusty Old Inactive Church This was Not some Big cathedral That was a Social club Where they Met Once every Six weeks This was An active Church They did Works But Jesus

Says In verse Two I have Not found Your works Complete In the Sight Of my God One Commentator Derek Thomas Says They had No divine Approval The work They did Was not In accord With anything That God Requires And then He says Industry In itself Is of No Value And that's Something That we Have to Learn Over And over Again Because We are So prone To Overvaluing And placing Great emphasis On our Works But our Works Will never Bring us From death To life Our good Works Our Religious Works Will never Save us They'll Never Keep us It's the

Work of Jesus It's the Work that Jesus has Completed at Calvary That's what Saves us And that's What keeps Us We sang it Lifted up Was he To die It is Finished Works are Finished It's all Done And it's Finished Was his Cry Now in Heaven Exalted High The work Done Hallelujah What a Saviour It seems In Sardis That many People came To church And they Got involved In the Church But they Didn't Come to Christ And if We haven't Come to Christ No matter How many Works we Do No matter How good Our reputation In the Community Or in the Church Community Maybe If we Haven't Come to Christ And Trusted In his Finished Work We are Dead That's the Rebuke That Jesus Speaks Fourth point There's a Resurrecting Call For those Who were Here Last Sunday Evening As Scott Was Preaching Scott Took Us To A valley In Ezekiel 37 A valley Full of Dry Bones A valley Full of Death And we See the Scene of Desolation We see The scene Of Hopelessness And the Question is What Happened Next Well what Happened Next was That through The word Of god And through The breath Of the Spirit of God Resurrection Life Came And here In this Letter Jesus Has just Pronounced The church In Sardis Dead But he Doesn't Sign a Death Certificate And walk Away He speaks To them He's Calling Them To life Verse Two Jesus Says Wake Up And Strengthen What Remains And Is About To Die For I Have Not Found Your Works Complete In The sight Of My God So Jesus Speaks To A dead Church To Dead People And he Says Wake Up And This Is Something That We See Over And Over In In

[38:57] The Bible We Could Go To John Chapter 11 Just To Take One Example And In John Chapter 11 We See Jesus Friend Lazarus And He Is Dead He's Not Just Sick He's Dead His Body Has Been In The Grave For Four Days What Happened Next Jesus Called Him To Wake Up Lazarus Arise He Says And There Is Resurrection And That's What Jesus Was Calling The Church In Sardis To Do He's Calling Them To Wake Up And Those Who Who Heard The Call Like Lazarus Did What Were They To Do In Response To The Call We Have The Instruction There In Verse Three Jesus Says Remember Then What You Received And Heard Keep

It And Repent And It's Just So Simple Remember And Repent Says Jesus He Even Gives Us The Alliteration So I Don't Have To Look For It Remember The Word Of God Which You Have Heard Through The Apostles Says!

Jesus And Keep It Don't Let It Go Through One Ear And Straight Out The Other Side Remember It Jesus Says Keep It And If You Are Living A Life That Deviates From It Repent Turn Back Change Direction And For You And I To Be Spiritually Alive And Awake That's What We Need To Do We Need To Keep On Remembering The Word Of God We Need To Keep On Repenting We Need To Keep On Turning From Sin We Need To Keep On Turning Away From Selfish Self And We Need To Keep On Doing What God's Word Says!

Remember And Repent Says Jesus And Then There's A Word Of Warning Jesus Says If You Will Not Wake Up I Will Come Like A Thief And You Will Not Know At What Hour I Will Come Against You And It's Crystal Clear If We Respond To Jesus Call There Is The Promise Of Resurrection Life And God Is With Us But If We Refuse To Respond In Faith To Jesus Call There Is Judgment There

Is Death And God Is Against Us I

Wonder Is There Anyone Here Tonight Who Is Hearing The Call Of Jesus Who Maybe For A Long Time Has Been Hearing The Call Of Jesus To Wake Up To Remember His Word To Turn From Sin To Repent If We Hear That Call Once That's An Immense Privilege That God The Son Would Speak Personally To Us And Call Us To Life But What Are We Doing With It What Audacity Is What Rebellion Is In Our Hearts If

[43 : 23] We Hear Week After Week After Week After Week After Week And We Resist If That's Where We Are We're We're In A State Of Danger Because There Is The Warning That Jesus Could Come Against Us But There Is Also The Promise Here Of Resurrection Life And Salvation If We Will Respond To Jesus In Faith And Repent A Rich City A Reputable Church A Rebuke A Resurrecting Call And Finally A Reward That Is Promised And

The Reward That Is Promised To Those Who Are In Sardis Those Who Hear And Respond To The Call Of Jesus It Has Three Parts To It The Promise For Those Who Respond Is One That They Will Walk With Jesus Two That They Will Be Made Worthy In Jesus And Three That Their Names Will Be Written And Never Erased From The Book Of Life The Lamb Is Jesus Book Of Life So Let Me Just Give You These Headings In The Next Five Minutes As We Think About This Reward First Of All Jesus Promises That We Will Walk With Him Verse Four Jesus Says Yet You Still Have A Few Names In Sardis People Who Have Not Soiled Their Garments And They Will Walk With Me Now We Often Sing The hymn I Was Tempted To To Have It Tonight Oh For A Closer Walk With God And That's What Jesus Promises As A Reward Immediately For Those Who Trust Him He Says They Will Walk With Me And That's What A Christian Is Not Just Someone Who Goes To Church Not Just Someone Who Does Works In Church And Sardis They Were Doing Both These Things And Yet They In

Eternity And That's A Great Thing To Think About As Well Isn't It Because For Those Of Us Who Are Christians I Don't Think Any Of Would Say Well Everything Is Perfect The Relationship We Have With Jesus In This World Is Troubled We We We Struggle Sometimes We We Are More In Romans 7 Than We Are In Romans 8 We're Saying The Apostle Paul The Good That I Want To Do I I Keep On Doing It In This World We're Wrestling With Sin That Inner Sin We're Wrestling With Satan Who Assaults Us But In Heaven Where We Go To Be With Jesus There's No Sin There's No Satan There's

No Struggle So Our Walk With Jesus Our Relationship With Christ Is Perfected Jesus Says Those Who Trust Me The Reward That I Promise Them Is That They Will Walk With Me Secondly He Promises That We Will Be Made Worthy In Jesus Verse 4 The Second Part Of It Jesus Says They Will Walk With Me In White For They Are Worthy Verse 5 The One Who Conquers Will Be Clothed Thus In White Garments So This Too Is A Promise For For All Who Wake Up All Who Hear The Call Of Jesus All Who Repent Of Sin All Who Come Into Relationship With Him Jesus Promises To Make Us Worthy In Him There Are Many People Who Every Time A Communion Season Comes Around They're

[48 : 35] In A State Of Anxiety And Torment Because They're Looking At Themselves And Thinking How Hard Have I Worked What Have I Done What Have I Not Done Am I Worthy Yet Have I Reached The Standard Yet Where I'm Worthy Enough To Go At The Table Well The Truth Is And Sardis Shows Us This We'll Never Get To A Stage Where We Can Work Ourselves To Worthiness Because As We're Told In Isaiah Even Our Even Our Best Works Are Like Filthy Rags We Can't Go To A Communion Table With That The Promise That Jesus Gives Is That If We Trust In Him He Will Make Us Worthy He Will Clothe Us In His Worthiness And In Revelation 7 We Have This Beautiful

Picture Of Heaven Where We See Those Who Have Been Made Worthy By Trusting In Jesus We Have This Picture That John Is Allowed To See Where We See Those Who Have Been Clothed In White Garments Revelation 7 And Verse 13 I'll Read A Few Verses Then One Of The Elders Asked Me These In White Robes Who Are They And Where Did They Come From I Answered Sir You Know And He Said These Are They Who Have Come Out Of The Great Tribulation They Have Washed Their Robes And Made Them White In The Blood Of The Lamb Therefore Therefore They Are Before The Throne Of God And Serve Him Day And Night In His Temple And He Who Sits On The Throne Will Spread His Tent Over Them Never Again Will They Hunger!

Never Again Will They Thirst The Sun Will Not Beat On Them Nor Any Scorching Heat For The Lamb At The Center Of The Throne Will Be The He Will lead them to springs of living water and

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

The reward Jesus promises is that we will walk with him. As we trust him, we will be made worthy in him. We will be given clothes for heaven. And lastly, our names will be written in the book of life.

That's the last part of this promise. Our names will be written in. And notice our names will never be erased from the book of life. Jesus says, I will never blot his name out of the book of life.

[51 : 34] I will confess his name before my father and before his angels. That's the promise of those who hear the call of Jesus and who come to him in repentance and faith.

And what Jesus says in this last little section is such a powerful contrast to finish with. If you see in verse 1, Jesus begins this letter by saying to those who are not trusting in him, you have a good name with people, he says, but that isn't worth much because you're dead.

That's how he begins. And now Jesus ends this letter by saying to those who are trusting in him, you have a good name with God. Your name is written in my book, and that is worth everything. Because you're alive forever. So that's something of the reward, the precious reward, that is promised to those who are trusting in Jesus, that is promised to those who are alive in him.

So the question we finish with is the same question we often finish with. And it's simply this. Are you, are we in Christ?

[53 : 06] We're in church, but they were in church in service. Are we in Christ? Are we trusting in Jesus?

Not in our works, not in our reputation, but are we trusting in Jesus? If not, tonight he is calling us to wake up, to believe in him, and to receive life, resurrection life, in him.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you again for these letters. We feel the challenge, we feel the seriousness of these letters, as we are called to examine ourselves.

But we confess, Lord, as we do examine ourselves, we see that we are sinners, we see that we are not worthy. And we thank you if we see that.

[54 : 26] We pray that you would help us to see if there's anyone here tonight who thinks that they can work themselves into heaven. We pray that the scales would fall from their eyes.

There's anyone here tonight who thinks that they can go week after week after week assuming that there will always be a call to wake up. Help them to have their ears unblocked.

Help us to know the privilege and the wonder of realizing that God the Son is calling us. Jesus the Saviour is calling us.

And all we simply have to do is come. Leaving behind our old life of sin. Leaving behind a life that is full of self.

And walking with Him. Give us faith, we pray, to do that. Help us, we pray, to be trusting only in Him.

[55 : 29] And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to conclude Psalm 72 and the last three verses of the Psalm.

72 in the Psalter. His name, His name forever shall endure. Last like the Son it shall. Men shall be blessed in Him and blessed.

All nations shall Him call. 17 to the end of the Psalm. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. Amen. Amen.

His name forever shall endure, Thus light the sun it shall.

Then shall be blessed in Him unblessed, All nations shall live home.

[56 : 39] Blessed be the Lord our God, The God of Israel.

For He alone the wondrous works, In glory that excel.

And blessed be His glorious name, To all eternity.

The whole earth left His glory through.

Amen.

[57 : 53] Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, The love of God the Father, And the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and forevermore. Amen.