



## WORDS FROM *Pastor Randy*

A new preacher came to a small Oklahoma church. He spent his first four days making personal visits to each of its members inviting them to come to the Sunday services. The next Sunday, only a handful of people came, and the building was all but empty.

The next week the Pastor placed a notice in the local newspaper stating that since the church was dead, it was everybody's duty to give it a decent Christian burial.

The service was held the following Sunday afternoon. A rather large and curious crowd turned out for the "funeral." In front of the pulpit was a closed casket that was smothered in flowers. After the preacher had finished with the eulogy, he opened the casket and invited the congregation to come forward and pay their final respects.

Filled with curiosity as to what would represent the corpse of a "dead church," all the people eagerly lined up to look in the coffin. Each "mourner" peeped into the coffin and then quickly away with a guilty

sheepish look. For there in the coffin, tilted at the correct angle, was a large mirror. The face they saw was their very own!

I don't want my church to die, do you? I don't want my church to be known as a "has been." I want my church to be alive, vibrant, and strong. I want to be a part of an exciting group of Christians who are growing to be what God wants them to be.

If my church dies, it's because I died! Churches die when its members stop supporting it. Churches get sick and die when its members stop caring. Other things become more important. Other places take priority over it. Other appointments and obligations take us away from our church and its ministries.

Some of the saddest words in Scripture are those spoken by our Lord to the Church of Sardis: *"I know thy works, thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead"*(Rev 3:1).

Revival is an opportunity for the renewal of spiritual power. It is chance for the dying to experience resuscitation. Revival is a chance to gather together in a charged spiritual atmosphere to catch a new vision and to experience the special presence of the Lord in a new way.

This Sunday begins our SUMMER REVIVAL. There will glorious music and great fellowship. For 5 special services, we'll be privileged to hear one of God's choicest servants, **Dr. Jerry Atkins**. He is a man of deep humility and conviction. He is a Bible preacher with a heart for souls. He is a man who still weeps as he preaches. He is a preacher who first hears from God before he opens his lips.

As I think about Brother Jerry, I am reminded of what Richard Baxter once said, "I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men!" That's the kind of preaching we'll hear this week.

Will you please make every possible effort to support the Revival services? We need every one of you to be here! Your attendance this week will demonstrate your desire to see God do something in the life of your church. Why not invite a friend to come and have supper with us and then stay for the service! Let's do it because we care about our church, our community, and our country.

These are days when everything else seems to be competing against the things of God. Most churches have stopped even trying to have a series of week night revival services because it's almost impossible to get church members to come. I think we're better than that! I'm looking for the members of First Baptist to support their church and

be a witness to our community this week.

Let's begin by being present in Sunday School this Sunday. Some of us have become so indifferent in our attendance. It's time to get back. We know what we should do . . . let's just do it!

Counting on you this week as they say to *"Make a show in the flesh"*!

Pastor Randy

---

# Trivia That Isn't Trivial

1. The disciples were first called "Christians" in what city?
2. What man in the Bible was called the "Son of Encouragement" (or consolation)?
3. Who was bitten by a snake & shook it off into a fire & felt no harm?

## **ANSWERS**

1. Antioch (Acts 11:26)
2. Barnabas (Acts 4:36)
3. Paul (Acts 28:3-5)