

Are You A Nominal Christian?

2025-07-20 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



Revelation 3

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

Sardis was the church with a great reputation. Jesus read the file differently: you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. Wake up. Pastor Matt defined nominal faith as liking Christ while declining the cross, even though Jesus named that cost from day one. The warning signs: you blend right into the culture around you, you do good things instead of God things, and your best spiritual days feel behind you. The good news in the letter: repent now, and there is still something left to strengthen.

To get started

- What do you have a reputation for that is not quite accurate anymore?

Looking back at the message

This one can sting. Keep pointing at diagnosis rather than verdict.

- 1 Pastor Matt said he was helping us diagnose, not making anyone feel bad. Which warning sign did you recognize in yourself?
- 2 Pastor Matt contrasted good things with God things, and quoted his wife's line, all I want is you, as what God says to busy people. What is the difference between the two for you?
- 3 Pastor Matt said the best season of your faith is not behind you, no matter how alive the old days felt. How much do you believe that? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Revelation 3:1-6 aloud. Verse 1 and verse 4 are both important.

- 4 Read Revelation 3:1. What does this church have a reputation for, and what does Jesus say is actually true?
- 5 Verse 2 gives an instruction. What are they told to do with what remains?
- 6 Verse 4 mentions a few people. What does it say about them?
- 7 Read Luke 9:23. What cost does Jesus name right at the start?

Bringing it home

Nostalgia about faith is very common. Treat it kindly.

- 8 When did your faith feel most alive, and what was different then?
- 9 If you lined up your daily values next to the culture's, where would the two lists match?
- 10 What is still alive in your faith that could be strengthened?
- 11 Where have you traded being a good person for actually spending time with God?

OPTIONAL

The group together

Reputation is a group problem as much as an individual one.

- 12 What is this group's reputation, and would it survive a closer look?
- 13 How does a group wake someone up without shaming them?
- 14 What is one thing still alive here that is worth strengthening?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What is one nearly-dead thing in your faith you want to strengthen this month?

You might pray about

- For those whose faith has quietly gone flat
- For an honest look at the gap between reputation and reality
- For what remains, that it would be strengthened
- For repentance that changes a family line