



A Worship Discussion Guide for Individuals, Groups & Families for the week of February 16, 2025

Read the Bible passage aloud in your group meeting. This is a worship discussion guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for your meeting, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Warm Up *The Letter to the Church at Sardis*

- What strengthens someone's faith?
 - After the besieging of Nineveh in around 612 BC, **Sardis** became the capital of the country of Lydia (modern day Turkey), and developed into an important crossroads for the trading goods and ideas between Greeks and Mesopotamians.
 - The last King of Lydia, Croesus, commissioned the construction of the temple of Artemis in Sardis, which became one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.
 - Sardis developed into a two-part town, the lower town where the common citizens lived, and the upper town for the wealthy. The modesty of the lower town is evidenced by the lack of protective wall surrounding it.
 - In 17 AD while under Roman rule, Sardis was almost completely destroyed by an earthquake. Though eventually rebuilt, it was never as important a city as it had been in the past.

Revelation 3:1-6 *Reputation & Reality*

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.

- How does Jesus introduce Himself to the church in Sardis? Why is this significant? Read the verse below from Revelation 1 for more insight.

*"Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the **seven spirits** who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth." --Revelation 1:4*

*"As for the mystery of the **seven stars** that you see in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. "*
--Revelation 1:20

"I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. ³Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. 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. ⁴Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches'."

- Jesus reflects back to Sardis the ways they are like Him. In what ways does this church reflect the glory of Christ? (4)
- What rebuke does Christ give to the church of Sardis? (1-4)

- How does Jesus call this church to respond to His rebuke (2-3)? What is the significance of each imperative Jesus gives?
 - Wake Up
 - Strengthen what remains
 - Remember what you had received and heard
 - Keep it
 - Repent
 - How does Jesus renew hope for this church? (6)
 - The church in Sardis had a reputation for being alive. However, their reputation falls short in the eyes of Jesus. When are you tempted to value your reputation above the reality that you are known and loved by God?
 - This church had a problem with “soiled clothes”. Their sin was a hidden uncleanness. When do you attempt to cover your sin? What is your reaction when you've been “found out”?
 - Jesus says, “remember what you have seen and heard” (3). Why is this part of repentance?
 - Pray together in response to God's Word.
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- Questions? Contact Pastor Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org

