

SARDIS: THE WALKING DEAD
REV. 3:1-6 / 5-16-18 / WED

INTRODUCTION

- A. The city of Sardis-**3:1a--“To the angel (Messenger) of the church in Sardis write:... (PICS).**
1. Built on top of a hill 1500 feet higher than the roads below it. Only one gate in and out, therefore, considered safe from invasion.
 2. Defeated twice, however, because their sentries were said to be asleep on duty.
 3. Suffered extensive destruction along with Philadelphia in an earthquake in 17 A.D.
 4. It was the home of Aesop, who wrote children’s fables.
 5. Gold and silver were first minted here.
- B. The vision of Christ Sardis needed-**3:1b--....These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars....**
1. Taken from Revelation **1:16a--In his right hand he held seven stars....**
 2. Jesus holds two things in his hand.
 - a. God’s power-“**seven spirits**” or sevenfold spirit.
 - b. God’s preachers-“seven stars”-interpreted in **1:20--.....The seven stars are the angels (Messengers) of the seven churches**
- C. The purpose of this letter to Sardis.
1. Practical purpose-a personal word to the church of Sardis.
 2. Prophetic purpose-covers the church era from 1500 to 1700, beginning with the Protestant Reformation and ending with a time of dead orthodoxy and evangelism.
 3. Personal purpose-to Christians and churches today.

I. THE REALITY OF THEIR SITUATION.

- A. The perception of Christ-3:1c--...**I know your deeds...**
- B. The perversion of the Church-3:1d---...**you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.**
 - 1. Their perverted reputation-good in name only.
 - 2. Their perverted reality-false reputation.
 - 3. Notice Jesus had no words of commendation for them as he had for most of the other seven churches.

II. THE RECOGNITION OF THEIR SOLUTION.

- A. They are to “wakeup”-3:2a--**Wake up!....**
 - 1. Means “**to chase sleep away**”-irony of their two defeats.
 - 2. Sleep is a symbol for complacency and satisfaction.
 - 3. They were living in their past glory days but doing nothing now for God.
- B. They are to “work”-at doing three things. This means there is still hope for this church.
 - 1. Revive-there is still a chance to rebuild their church-3:2b--
.....**Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God.**
 - 2. Remember -3:3a--**Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast....**
 - 3. Repent-3:3b--.....**and repent.....**
 - 4. The consequence of not doing these three things—3c--.....**But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you. (This isn't a ref. to the Second Coming but to judgment)**

III. THE REDEMPTION OF THE SAINTS.

- A. A promise to the remnant-3:4-- **Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.**
1. Soiled clothes were a symbol of sin-Ephesians 4:22--**You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.**
 2. Sardis, like Thyatira, was known for their woolen garments.
- B. A promise to the repentant-3:5
- C. A promise to the reprobate-3:6
- D. This message to Sardis leaves us with three signs of a dead or sleeping church.
1. A dead church has a religion without real Christianity—3:1--....**I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.**
 2. A dead church has no struggles.
 3. A dead church focuses completely on the past—3:1--... **you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.**