

October 25th, 2020
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
REVELATION : Letter To The Seven Churches- To the Church in Sardis
Episode 6
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1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. 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. ⁴Yet 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. ⁵The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. ⁶Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Understanding Sardis:

- **A crossroads city-**
- **A wealthy city-First mint in all of Asia minor**
- **Known for mixing sexuality with worship to the gods-**
 - **Diana/Artemis:** Diana, in [Roman religion](#), goddess of wild animals and the [hunt](#), identified with the Greek goddess [Artemis](#). Her name is akin to the Latin words *dium* ("sky") and *dus* ("daylight"). Like her Greek counterpart, she was also a goddess of domestic animals. As a [fertility](#) deity she was [invoked](#) by women to aid [conception](#) and delivery.
- **Largest Jewish synagogue in Asia minor-**
 - **Assimilation:** Jews had written their names at the synagogue in Greek rather than in Hebrew, which spoke to their assimilation into Greek culture.

The Declaration: "WARNING" Vs. 1 To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

- This is the **same declaration** that was given to the church of **Ephesus** whom Jesus promised a removal of their lampstand if they did not repent.
 - **Similar warning to Sardis: Vs.6** The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.

The Deeds:

- **Alive but dead: Vs. 1** I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.

- **Opposite trajectory of Jesus:** To the church in Smyrna he stated in: **Ch 2 Vs 8** “These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again.
 - **Assimilation** to the culture was killing the church, Jesus did not come to collaborate but to conquer.
 - The church had moved away from exclusivity. Make peace by tolerance and acceptance.
 - **Culture Consumer vs. Culture Critic**

The Challenge: Wake Up - Strengthen - Finish - Remember - Hold Fast - Repent

The Warning: Vs. 3 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.

- Twice this city had been conquered at night while the guards slept.

The Remnant: Vs 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.

Small Group Questions

1. The church at Sardis was known for assimilating into the culture rather than creating a contrast to it. Where is that line in our culture today?
2. **Vs. 1** talks about a church that is known to be alive, but one Jesus sees as dying. What could a dying church look like today?
3. The church has debated whether a person who was once saved can lose that very salvation. What do you think **Vs. 5** might be saying to this argument?
4. Jesus tells this church to wake up. What would an "asleep" believer look like today?
5. Jesus talks in **Vs. 4** about some believers in Sardis being a remnant. What would the qualities of a remnant believer or church be today?

Prov 24:33-34 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.