



The Book of Revelation Session 9:
The Letter to the Church at Sardis

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Revelation 3:1-6

Key things to keep in mind, the bible is an intentionally written book, from the inspiration of God Himself.

*The bible reveals Jesus Christ, shows God's divine design for humanity and it is useful **“to prepare and equip his people to do every good work”** as stated in **2 Timothy 3:16-17**.*

The Book of Revelation is about The Revelation or Unveiling of Jesus Christ and things which will soon take place.

A Unique Promise

Revelation 1:3 tells us the those who “Read... Hear... Understand and Keep” what is written in this book will receive a special blessing:

With in the book of Revelation are Letters to the Seven Churches. These letters are **God's report card** for each of these churches.

Not only did God have a report card on them, but God also has a report card on the churches today and on us.

For it states seven times in this book, **“He that has an ear let Him hear what the Spirit is saying”**. If you can hear, then there is a report card on you in Heaven.

These seven Letters should be view from three perspectives.

- 1. Historical view:**
- 2. Life application:**
- 3. Prophetic view:**

We will be studying these churches primarily from a life application viewpoint.

Seven Design Elements or features in the structure of Each of the Letters.

We will teach with these seven in mind.

- **Name of the Church**
- **Title Chosen of Jesus Christ**
- **Commendation**



- **Concern**
- **Exhortation**
- **Promise to the Overcomer**
- **The emphasis was that the letters were written to everyone. “He that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”**

The Letter to the Church at Sardis Revelation 3:1-6

"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. 6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

Sardis was Biblically known as “The Spiritually Dead Church”: Almost all of the people in the church of Sardis had fallen asleep spiritually, except for a small remnant of believers. The Dead Church was encouraged to kindle and revive any small bit of faith they had left.

Name of the Church

Revelation 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write...

“Sardis”: Three meanings have been proposed: "prince of joy," "that which remains," and "those escaping."

As time went on the name Sardis became synonymous with pretensions unjustified; promise without performance; appearance without reality; and, false confidence that proclaimed their ruin. They betrayed themselves by lack of watchfulness and diligence.

Title of Christ

... These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;

“Seven Spirits of God”: The Old Testament idiom for the Holy Spirit.

Seven Stars represent the seven churches.



Why does Jesus use this title with this particular church? He wants these churches to know that He is to one who dictates whether they stay spiritually alive or not.

Jesus is the authority for where and how the Holy Spirit moves. Because the Holy Spirit comes to bear witness of Jesus.

There is a major component missing in this letter, there is no “Commendation” in this letter!

Concern

Revelation 3:1 "I know your works. We see Jesus is letting this church know, like He has let many of the other churches know that He knows their works, He knows what is going on in the church.

And because He says “**he who has an ear let him hear but the spirit is saying**” He wants us to know that He know our works our deeds, our thoughts, our actions and the motive of our hearts as well.

...that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

Name: Greek onoma = Name, title, label character or reputation.

This word “name” appears three times in six verses in this letter.

Sardis has a name [or Reputation] of being alive, and “**but you are dead**”!

This church looked like they were alive in the Lord, they looked like they had it going on. But Jesus knows the motive and the heart of the Church, and He knew that they looked like they were alive to the natural world. But to Him, He knew that they were dying or dead.

The Reputation they had to other churches, even to the world, it looked like they had it going on.

Death is synonymous with being spiritless. “*The Holy Spirit had left the building.*”

Probably by the standards of the flesh they looked alive, but by the standards of Jesus there was no to little spiritual life, growth or move in the church.

They probably quenched the Holy Spirit through the works of their flesh.

Their motive and their hearts were not towards God in their work, only their prominence was important.

We must be careful as a body of believers, that we understand, Gods opinion of us is the main one that counts.

They could have been winning members for the church, but not winning and transforming souls for the kingdom.



Exhortation- To do better!

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

A call to watchfulness: A few things that we all should be watchful of, In these last days.

Be watchful of -Wiles of the Devil- 1 Peter 5:8

Be watchful of temptation, *of the enemy, the world, and our own carnality*- Matthew 26:41

Be Watchful for His coming Mt 24:42, 43; Mk 13:37; 1 Thess 5:6

Be Watchful of false teachers- Acts 20:29-31

...for I have not found your works perfect before God. The only way that we can do perfect works before God the Father, is if we do it through Jesus Christ. Living a life of love, faith, and repentance!

“Strengthen Things which Remain”- Even the truths that they did adhere to, and the works that they were doing, Jesus is saying that they weren't complete.

Works that are done without the love of God, the fear of God, in loyalty and humility **“...those Works Are Not Complete”**

He Tells Them to Remember - **“Remember therefore how you have received and heard”**.

He tells them to go back and remember, the truth on which the church is built upon.

Repentance

Justification by faith alone.

The absoluteness of Word of God.

The depravity of man.

Redemption by His blood.

The Importance of the Cross.

They are to make His name great, and not their own.

The same is true today. Great truths are being lost in many teachings in churches today,

We must all remember that “Without Him Being our Lord, we can’t do anything that pleases Him.



Without us surrendering to His Lordship, He won't do anything through us that pleases Him.

... hold fast and repent.

Jesus is telling the Church at Sardis, after they have remembered that without Him, they can't do anything. They ought to go back and to hold fast to these foundational teachings that the Church was established upon.

...Therefore, if you will not watch,

A warning to those who are not watchful, strengthened, holdfast, and repent, ignoring the times; *Jesus says* ...**I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.**

Apparently, He will not come “as a thief” for those who are diligent and aware.

Exhortation- The call to a faithful remnant!

4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

Before coming to faith, who we were was as “filthy rags” in comparison to the righteousness required by God (Isa. 64:6). Having trusted in Christ, His righteousness has been imputed to us and we are positionally holy.

Even then, our walk, (not our status) but our walk can become defiled by patterning ourselves after the conduct of this world and it's fleshly activities. (James. 1:27; Jude 23).

But, by confessing our sins, and receiving the forgiveness Jesus won for us at the cross, we can walk in white garments before the Lord each and every day. These few in Sardis had steadfastly remained in close fellowship with God. (1John. 1:9).

Promise to the Overcomer

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.