

THE NEED FOR REVIVAL
The Picture of a Dying Church
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Revelation 3:1–5

¹To the angel of the church in Sardis write: “He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

²Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. ³So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it and repent. Therefore, if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. ⁴But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

(An Active Church) “I know your deeds” (A Dying Church) “But you are dead.”

The church is dying spiritually; therefore, it is happening undetected by the carnal eye. They have a reputation for being alive. But who is it alive to? Not to Jesus. He sees the church’s terminal condition. However, the church is continuing with business as usual, for in their estimation, they are alive! The church must not examine itself by itself, nor should we as members judge ourselves by ourselves.

1 Corinthians 4:4

*For I am conscious of nothing against myself,
Yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord.*

The Holy Spirit is the life of God’s holy church. The Holy Spirit is not dying, but He is leaving, and “The body without the Spirit is dead.”

TRACKING IN THE WORLD (Why the Spirit is leaving)

In the Sardis church and churches today, the Holy Spirit is being subjugated by the flesh. The righteous garments of many of its members have become soiled, defiled, or stained by way of “tracking in” from the outside world around them. The contaminants of the world are infiltrating the church.

There has been a “drifting away” from the wholesome pure doctrines of Christ. The Sardis church had wandered away from the things which they had been taught, the things which were brought to them through the ministry of the apostles. They had drifted off into a deep, spiritual slumber.

A WEAK PULSE PROVIDES HOPE FOR SURVIVAL

Jesus was sending them an urgent message for revival. “To the angel of the church in Sardis write...”

Revelation 3:2

*Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die;
for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.*

Not all hope was lost. A weak pulse was still detected. Some things, some life remained.

Matthew quotes Isaiah the prophet saying,

*“A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick
He will not snuff out, till He has brought justice through to victory.”*

Matthew 12:20 (NIV)

THE NEED FOR REVIVAL

What little faith the Sardis church still had was weak and barely hanging on and the fire of their passion for the Lord had all but went out. They must renew the strength of their faith and fan into flame the gifts of god’s grace which had been entrusted to them.

Their spiritual decay had led them away from the righteousness of Christ. They had ceased from fulfilling the works which God had ordained them for and called them to do.

James 2:17; 24

*¹⁷Even so faith if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.
²⁴You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.*

Without a revival, the church at Sardis would find themselves left behind when the Lord came to receive His glorious church. The question is, "Are we ready?" are we sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit?

THE WORD OF GOD

For the church to live in the Spirit, it must live in the word. For the church to be ready at the Lord's appearance, it must be prepared by the word!

Revelation 3:3

Remember what you have received and heard; and keep it and repent. Therefore, if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

Revival comes when the word of God is preached, heard, and received! We must get back to the pure, unadulterated, word of God! We must live by the bible!

When Jesus faced temptation, He kept the Word of God (quoting Deut. 8:3)

Matthew 4:4

*"It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone,
but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."*

The source of Life for the church comes from the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 6:63

*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing;
The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

May we adopt this prayer as our own:

Psalms 119:33–40

*³³Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall observe it to the end.
³⁴Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law and keep it with all my heart.
³⁵Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.
³⁶Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to dishonest gain.
³⁷Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity (worthless things) and revive me in Your ways.
³⁸Establish Your word to Your servant, as that which produces reverence for You.
³⁹Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your ordinances are good.
⁴⁰Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me through Your righteousness.*