



When the Spirit Speaks to the Church

When a Rude Awakening Becomes a Spiritual Awakening
Revelation 3:1-6

Without Christ, we are dead no matter what reputation we may have!

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. I know your works. You have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.’”

Text Message:

- This letter may be hard to hear, but it begins with this great comfort: Jesus “has” the church (“seven stars”)!
- Yet paired with this great comfort is a most sobering truth: “You have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”
- In other words, Sardis was coasting on the reputation of what used to be, rather than facing its own “deadness.”
- Every church has a reputation for something, but does the reputation match reality?
- Reality takes time to catch up with reputation, for good or bad: Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.” Acts 9:13
- The message to Sardis should be a sober “heart check” to us as to where we are with Christ **now**.
- This was Sardis’ wake-up call! This is our wake-up call too!

With Christ, we are awakened to new life and possibilities!

Text Message:

- Jesus offers the church five commands in Verses 2-3:
 - 1) “Wake up!” Sardis as a city had been defeated in 549 B.C. and 218 B.C. for its failure to “wake up!”
 - 2) “Strengthen what remains.” Note the church was not to do something new, but to renew strength for what remained.
 - 3) “Remember.” While worded differently, this message is in essence the same as that to the church at Ephesus in 2:5.
 - 4) “Keep it.” This has the sense of continually guarding something as precious.
 - 5) “Repent.” Choose a new mindset and course of action.
- There is a high price for not waking up spiritually: “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.” Verse 3b
- No doubt this warning would have reminded the church in Sardis of the high price the city paid in not waking up and suffering defeat.

In Christ, we are conquerors, clothed, citizens of God’s kingdom, and confessed before the Father!

Verse 5:

Text Message:

- Remember again, though hard to hear, the letter to the church in Sardis bookends with words of great comfort!
- Notice these “precious promises” that fuel us to live wholeheartedly for Christ (2 Peter 1:3-4). **IN CHRIST we are:**
 - 1) Conquerors (compare Romans 8:37).
 - 2) Clothed. In other words, we can live like Jesus, who was **in** the world, not **of** the world, yet **for** the world!
 - 3) Citizens of God’s kingdom (implied in Jesus’ words about not being blotted out).
 - 4) Confessed before the Father.
Nothing on earth compares (unless we are so bound to earth)!