Revelation 3:1-6

Wake up from deadness

Christ's message to the church in Sardis



Sardis: The "Impenetrable City"

- 30 miles southeast of Thyatira; a major center of trade and traffic, at its peak in 50 BC
- Mountains around it gave a sense of overconfidence
- Captured by Cyrus in 549 BC and conquered by Alexander in 218 BC, both times for lack of watchfulness



Sardis city ruins above Mount Tmolus

Rebuilt After the AD 17 Earthquake



Temple of Artemis, one section dedicated to Tiberius

The city built by contributions from the king, minted a coin honoring Tiberius and Rome, “Caesarean Sardis”, and built a temple to him



Summary of Christ's Letter to Sardis

Christ's strength

Him who holds the 7 Spirits and the 7 Stars

Commendation

A good reputation, and a few walking with Him

Condemnation

You are dead

Warning

Wake up and strengthen what little faith remains

Promise

Dressed in white; acknowledged before the Father

Summary

WAKE UP

Alive in Name, Dead in Reality

Alive in name

A church past its prime, living on reputation, with no real false-doctrine problem.

Dead in reality

Their deeds were incomplete or empty (v. 2), like Pharisees playing a part.

Common when a church takes a good season for granted.

Three Wake-Up Calls from Jesus to a Dead Church

01

Fear the Spirit of Christ

v. 1

02

Follow the Word of Christ

vv. 2-3

03

Find Joy in your Glorification with Christ

vv. 4-6

Wake-Up Call 1 · Revelation 3:1

Fear the Spirit of Christ

Jesus leads us through the Holy Spirit He sends.

John 15:26

The Spirit of truth will bear witness of Me.

Romans 8:9

If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

A. No Sin Is Hidden from Him

The seven stars

He holds the seven stars (pastors), with control over the churches and accountability for their leaders.

The seven Spirits

They point to the Holy Spirit's omniscience.
Zech. 4:10; Rev. 4:5

He knows every heart through His Spirit who indwells believers.

B. No Hypocrisy Fools Him

“I know your deeds”

Outward activity with no spiritual reality.

Not yet past the point of no return: “things which are about to die”

Wake-Up Call 2 · Revelation 3:2-3

Follow the Word of Christ

Be God-centered, Bible-centered, Christ-centered.

A. Be God-Centered (v. 2)

“Wake up”

Keep on watching. Lack of vigilance led to lack of love for God.

Strengthen what remains

“You are dead” is urgent but recoverable.

“In the sight of My God”

Their deeds were incomplete. Works must flow from living faith.

“Every sin is a fruit of being weary of God”

John Owen

B. Be Bible-Centered (v. 3):

Remember, Keep, Repent

01

Remember the truth

The gospel received and heard. The deposit of Scripture has not changed.

02

Apply the truth

“Keep on keeping” through application.

03

Change through the truth

Decisive repentance that changes lifestyle.

C. Be Christ-Centered (v. 3b)

Jesus will come like a thief, at an unknown hour, for a surprise evaluation.

> *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock"*
>
> Revelation 3:20

You will not know what hour. His coming is imminent.

Wake-Up Call 3 · Revelation 3:4-6

Find joy in your glorification with Christ

"But": a remnant had not defiled their garments, keeping from the paganism of Sardis.

Four Elements of Our Future Glorification

01 Purification

Walk with Me in white

v. 4

02 Glorification

Overcomers clothed in white

v. 5; Rev. 19:14

03 Evaluation

Never erased from the book of life

v. 5

04 Affirmation

Confessed before the Father and angels

v. 5; Matt. 10:32

He Who Has an Ear,
Let Him Hear

A reminder to every church: forsake deadness or lose your reward.