

1 **DEAD IN CHRIST, OR JUST DEAD?**

Revelation 3:1-6

2 **A GLIMPSE OF SARDIS**

A virtually impregnable city, located about 50 miles east of Smyrna. It boasted extensive fruit orchards, textile industries, jewelry factories and great wealth. Gold mined from the river made it one of the richest and most powerful cities of the ancient world.

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- Its history included being captured by both Cyrus (546 BC) and Alexander the Great (334 BC) and being destroyed by an earthquake in 17 BC. Rome rebuilt her, and Sardis converted to Christianity in the first century. The most imposing building in the city was the temple of Artemis (Greek goddess of the wilderness, the hunt, wild animals and fertility).

4 **INTRO TO JESUS**

The seven Spirits of God? Say what?

Perhaps a referring to the Holy Spirit's 7-fold ministry (Isa. 11:2-5)

Perhaps a reference to the description of the Spirit in Zech. 4

In either case, again 7 is a number of completeness in Scripture, so this phrase indicates the fullness of the Spirit

5 **COMMENDATIONS? HARDLY.**

"YOU HAVE A REPUTATION"

Remember the previous letters where "I know your deeds..." was an exciting reality? Well, not this time...

No good thing found in Sardis church

(See Jesus' description of the Pharisees, Matt 23:27-28)

"Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected (Eliab)...Man looks on the outward appearance..." 1 Sam. 16:7

6 **YOU LOOK ALIVE**

1 Huge crowds

A full church calendar

Programs, programs, programs.

Multiple services

Coffee shop/book store

Theater seating

Cool lighting

Stadium as a venue

2 An awesome band or choir

Community outreach

Dramatic everything
 Multi-million dollar facility
 Multi-million dollar budget
 Radio ministry
 Online presence
 Cool shirts, mugs, etc.

7 **"BUT YOU ARE DEAD."**

If the Great Physician declares you dead, you're dead.

If the Author of life declares you lifeless,
 you're lifeless.

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8 **VS. 2 WAKE UP?**

But You just said we're dead!

Jesus referred Lazarus' death as sleep (Jn 11: 11)

"Strengthen what is about to die"
 – You are not without hope!

9 **VS. 3 THE WAY BACK – EVEN FROM DEATH?**

- Remember what you have received and heard
 (John 14:26 offers great hope here)
- Obey it (John 8:31)
- Repent
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"...otherwise I will come like a thief."

Not the Second Coming, but to bring sudden judgment on the church

10 **VS. 4 YET YOU HAVE A FEW...**

Note the individuality of our faith experience

You will not be saved by your daddy's faith or g'ma's faithfulness.
 You will not be saved by the name above the door of the church.
 Nor by the offerings you give or the sacrifices you make

You will be saved by grace through faith in Christ alone
 (Eph. 2:8-9)

11 **VSS. 4-5 TO THE OVERCOMER**

Those who have not soiled their clothes will walk with Jesus, dressed in white

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The overcomer will never have his name erased from the Book of Life, but will be acknowledged by Christ before God.

Imagine the Savior, smiling and telling the Father,

"That one right there? That's one of mine!"

See Luke 12:8-9

12 **HOW DID THAT GO FOR SARDIS?
THE REST OF THE STORY...**

According to biblical archeology, it appears Sardis heeded the warning of the Savior. Remember the temple of Artemis? Archeological exploration has found the Temple of Artemis 'littered' with engravings of the Cross, suggesting that the Church in Sardis indeed came back to life and took over the temple as a house of worship of the one true God. When the temple/church fell into disuse in the 4th century, a church was built on its southeast corner.

How will it go for us?