

## SERMON OUTLINE

In Revelation 3:1-6 Christ addresses the church in Sardis with 6 declarations of truth concerning Himself.

- I. I am He who has the spiritual power you require (v. 1a).
- II. I am He who knows your works (v. 1b, 2c).
- III. I am He who will surprise you with judgment (v. 3e) if you refuse to:
  - A. Become watchful (v. 2a).
  - B. Strengthen what remains (v. 2b).
  - C. Remember what you know (v. 3a).
  - D. Keep what you know (v. 3c).
  - E. Repent (v. 3d).
- VI. I am He who knows and rewards the faithful among you (v. 4).
- V. I am He who rewards those who conquer (v. 5).
- VI. I am He who commands those who are able to listen (v. 6).

## BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 3, 2018

Passage: Revelation 3:1-6

Memory Passage: Revelation 3:5

### DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rev. 3:1-6.** Some background on Sardis that might prove helpful: Sardis was a city built on a promontory sitting 1500 feet above the valley floor with steep-drop offs on all sides and barely connected to the mountain itself by a steep and narrow path. It was considered so impenetrable by invaders that “capturing Sardis” was a phrase used to describe something impossible to accomplish. However, it was overtaken twice in well-known events, by Cyrus in 549 BC and Antiochus the Great in 218 BC, because the watchmen let their guards down and a single troop scaled the wall unnoticed and opened the gate. Though the city was destroyed by earthquake in 17 AD and rebuilt by Emperor Augustus himself, their fame and reputation were dwindling by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Sardis was wealthy (it sat on a prominent trade route) and its patron goddess was Artemis, to whom a large temple (larger than the Artemisian in Ephesus) remained unfinished. Their pagan worship practices revolved around death, immortality, the fertility cycle, and life coming out of death. Sardis also boasted a large Jewish community and one of the largest synagogues ever excavated (built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century).

- (b) What do the “seven spirits of God” and the “seven stars” symbolize, and why does Jesus choose to identify Himself with these?
- (c) What similarities do you notice between the messages to Sardis and Ephesus?

### DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rev. 3:1-6.** How do Sardis’ “deeds” compare with the deeds we have seen in the first 4 churches?
- (b) Explain how Sardis has a “reputation of being alive.”
- (c) In spite of this reputation, Jesus says they are dead. What does He see and know that those around Sardis do not?
- (d) How is the Sardis church asleep (note Jesus’ command to “wake up” [lit. “become watchful”])?

### DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rev. 3:1-6.** To what does “what remains” refer, and how should they “strengthen” what remains?
- (b) How do the works of the Sardis church fail to be “complete in the sight of (Jesus’) God?”
- (c) What has this church previously “received and heard,” and what will “remembering” look like?
- (d) Why does the command to “repent” come last in this series of 5 commands in vs. 2-3, and how does it relate to the commands to “remember” and “keep?”

### DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rev. 3:1-6.** What will cause Jesus to “come” to them, and for what purpose will He come (cf. Matt. 24:43-44, Luke 12:39-40, 1 Thess. 5:2-4, 2 Pet. 3:10, and Rev. 16:15)?
- (b) What have those “who have not soiled their garments” done that others have not?
- (c) What does “walk with me in white” symbolize, what makes them “worthy” to do this, and how does it relate to the blessing given to the one who conquers in v. 5 (cf. Zech. 3:5-6, Rev. 3:18, 4:4, 6:9-11, 7:9-14, & 19:8)?
- (d) Does the promise not to blot the conqueror’s name from the book of life make the opposite a possibility (i.e. that one could actually *be* blotted out)? Explain your answer.

### DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rev. 3:1-6, Matt. 10:32, Luke 12:8 & 2 Tim. 2:12.** Why is it important for Jesus to confess the names of believers before His Father and His angels? Explain the connection between the 4 uses of “name” vs. 1-6 (“reputation” in v. 1 is also “name” in Greek).
- (b) How might this last blessing reveal a specific work that was incomplete in the Sardis church?
- (c) What would Jesus find in the Bible Church’s reputation that looked alive but He would pronounce spiritually dead?
- (d) What areas of your own life “remain” but require “strengthening,” and how should you go about this task?
- (e) Write down at least 3 more applications of 3:1-6 for our church and 3 more applications for you personally.

DATE: June 3, 2018

PASSAGE: Revelation 3:1-6

*To Sardis*