

## THE REVELATION

### LESSON 9: THE CHURCH IN SARDIS: THE WALKING DEAD

#### Intro:

BIG IDEA: Jesus is able to \_\_\_\_\_ our true \_\_\_\_\_ condition.

#### Background

- Capital of the province of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Located in the \_\_\_\_\_ River valley, NE of Ephesus. It is 35 miles SE of Thyatira & 50 miles east of Smyrna.
- The steep ridge of Mt. Tmolus offered \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Located 1,500 ft above the plains.
- \_\_\_\_\_ scaled the cliffs under the cover of darkness to capture the city in 549 B.C.
- Conquered by Antiochus the Great in 218 B.C. by \_\_\_\_\_ to keep \_\_\_\_\_.
- Had a temple to \_\_\_\_\_, goddess of love and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Archeologists have also unearthed a large \_\_\_\_\_.
- It was famous for its \_\_\_\_\_ dye and \_\_\_\_\_ goods.
- It was a busy center for trade and prosperity.
- Greek historian Herodotus notes they were also known for \_\_\_\_\_.

#### The Self-Revelation of Jesus

<sup>1</sup>"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.

- Some argue the seven spirits are the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. Jesus is able to see what only God can.
- Some that they represent the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit. Jesus is able to give spiritual life.

Why would Jesus want them to know that He holds the Spirit?

#### The Good

<sup>4</sup>Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

- In a city filled with immorality, only a \_\_\_\_\_ have not \_\_\_\_\_ their garments.
- Unlike the common red fabric for which they were famous, these people wore \_\_\_\_\_.
- They were not \_\_\_\_\_ by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Even the "worst" churches may have some \_\_\_\_\_ members of the true body.

## THE REVELATION

What sins of this city are we free from?

### The Bad

"I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. <sup>2</sup> ... , for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God.

- "\_\_\_\_\_": they had a great reputation, enjoying the praise of men but not God.
- It was probably a large, \_\_\_\_\_ stable and \_\_\_\_\_ church.
- They were \_\_\_\_\_ active and seemed lively. No overt \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine.
- But they were \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus saw beneath the façade to the real heart of the situation.
- Their works did not fulfill God's \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ for the church.
- Most of them had \_\_\_\_\_ their garments: secret defilement, participating in immorality.
- This immorality was not connected to the worship of \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Inscriptions from pagan shrines declared those with \_\_\_\_\_ clothes as excluded from \_\_\_\_\_.

How do people often evaluate churches that are superficial?

What is the true source of vitality for a church?

What sign of life were they missing?

What sins of this city have stained us?

"It had no shortage of money, talent or human resources. There was every indication of life and vigor." **John Stott**<sup>22</sup>

"None would be more surprised at the accusations than she herself." **Michael Wilcock**<sup>23</sup>

### The Commands

<sup>2</sup>Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die ... <sup>3</sup> Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent.

- "*Wake up*" while not dead yet, time was running out.
- Their stronghold had been captured 2 times by soldiers scaling the \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>22</sup> Stott, pp. 78.

<sup>23</sup> Wilcock, pp. 52.

## THE REVELATION

- “*Strengthen*” their spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ left them in a \_\_\_\_\_ state.
- “*Remember*” the truth they had. They had to remember the \_\_\_\_\_ they had received.
- “*Keep*” they needed to \_\_\_\_\_ the truth in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel.
- “*Repent*” they had to turn away from their sin and \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

“A dynamic minority of awakened and responsible Christians is able by prayer, love and witness both to preserve a dying church from extinction and to fan its flame into a fire.” **John Stott**<sup>24</sup>

### The Warning

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.

- Strength can lead to \_\_\_\_\_ if one is not careful. Their ease of life led to \_\_\_\_\_.
- They needed to be \_\_\_\_\_ to keep watch, being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Robbers hid in the \_\_\_\_\_ around Sardis, springing upon unexpected travelers.

### The Promise

<sup>5</sup> The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. <sup>6</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

- The ones who conquer will be pure, symbolized by the white, \_\_\_\_\_, garments.
- Their name will be found in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Those who confess Him with \_\_\_\_\_ will have their names \_\_\_\_\_ by Jesus before the Father (**Mt. 10:32**).

“When earthly citizens die, their name are erased from the records; the names of the spiritual conquerors would never be blotted out; their glorious life would endure.” **William Hendriksen**<sup>25</sup>

### Conclusion:

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<sup>24</sup> Abid, pp. 85.

<sup>25</sup> Hendriksen, pp. 74.