

LETTERS FROM JESUS

PART 6: LIVING IN THE PAST

REVELATION 3:1-6



Sermon Overview

Despite the church in Sardis's good reputation, they were spiritually dead. Jesus offers admonishment for their false reputation, an antidote for restoration, and assurance for the faithful remnant within the church.

PART SIX

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus repeatedly condemns the Pharisees for their obsession with only their outward reputation and not their inner spiritual walk.

Jesus offers a similar admonishment to the church in Sardis, which had a good reputation, but was spiritually dead.

¹ “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.

² Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.

³ Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

⁴ Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.

⁵ He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.

⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

REVELATION 3:1-6

ABOUT SARDIS

700 years before the book of Revelation was written, Sardis was one of the great cities of the world. It had a global reputation for its wealth and power, as well as its laziness. Over the centuries the city was repeatedly conquered because the people of the city preferred easy living and comfort and were easy prey. This laziness was adopted by the church in this city.

JESUS'S RESPONSE

In response to the church's laziness, Jesus offers admonishment for their false reputation, an antidote for restoration, and assurance for the faithful.

ADMONISHMENT FOR THEIR FALSE REPUTATION

In verse 1, Jesus describes Himself as the one who “holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.” In Scripture, the number seven indicates completeness or fullness. Jesus is telling the church that He has complete knowledge of every single believer and authority over every church that belongs to Him. Jesus knew and acknowledged that the church's positive reputation in the pagan culture betrayed the spiritual deadness within.

ANTIDOTE FOR RESTORATION

In verse 2, Jesus calls the church to wake up to the reality of their spiritual condition and repent before it is too late.

ASSURANCE FOR THE FAITHFUL

Jesus gives the faithful remnant that are left in the church a two-fold promise of His righteousness and their salvation.

⁵ He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.

REVELATION 3:5

CLOTHED IN WHITE ROBES

White robes were a symbol of festivities, victory, purity, righteousness, and resurrection. These robes are the gift of grace from Jesus to His faithful children.

ETERNAL SECURITY

Jesus promises His faithful remnant that their names will never be blotted out from the Book of Life. They will be acknowledged by Jesus before His Father.

The names of the faithful are recorded in the Book of Life in nothing less than the blood of Jesus. No one can erase them.