

SARDIS: THE CHURCH WITH REPUTATION,  
BUT DYING

Rev. 3:1-6

Introduction: Sardis pictures the church that has an excellent reputation among churches, but is in reality dead and lifeless spiritually. It was resting on its past history of spirituality.

I. THE RECEIPTS (v1)

1. The Pastor: (angel or messenger). It's been said, perhaps proven, "so goes the pastor, so goes the church."
2. The Sardis Church: It had a history of wealth and glory; the people had become complacent; it was located on a high mountain cliff with a suburb located at the base of the mountain.

II. THE SPEAKER (v1)

1. Jesus is described as having the seven spirits of God: (Isa. 11:@) - The Spirit of the Lord; of Wisdom; of Understanding; of Counsel; of Might; of Knowledge; of Fear. (The number 7 stands for completion).
2. Jesus is holding the seven stars - or pastors.

III. THE COMPLAINT (v1)

1. Formalism: They had all sorts of programs and activities.
2. Ritualism: They had the right beliefs, ministries.
3. Complacency: They were void of Spiritual life and energy, and were void of the Spirit of God.

IV. THE COUNSEL (v2)

1. "Watch" - rouse, awaken, stir up the hearts and minds unto the Lord and His Word.
2. "Strengthen the things that remain:" Ministries had been started for the Lord but were now dying.
3. Nothing they had started had ever been completed or carried out as it should have been.

V. THE WARNING (v3)

1. To remember how the Gospel had once gripped their hearts.
2. To revive that spirit of excitement they once had.
3. To repent of their complacency.
4. If they persist, Jesus will remove His presence completely.

VI. THE PROMISE (v4-6)

1. Those who had not defiled themselves but stayed focused on Jesus would be rewarded.
2. The "overcomers" (the same as those who had not defiled themselves) would: be given a garment of white, signifying purity; would have their names kept in the Book of Life at death; and would be personally recognized by Jesus at Judgment.

CONCLUSION:

1. Because a church has a lot of staff, programs, ministries, and members DOES NOT always mean it is right with the Lord!
2. The PASTOR is responsible to the Lord for the attitude of the church.
3. The faithful church member will be personally recognized by Jesus, Himself, at judgment.