

What If Jesus Wrote This Church A Letter?

Sardis: The Dead Church

(Revelation 3:1-6)

- Introduction:
1. The stars comprising the “Big Dipper” are approximately 100 light years away.
 2. In other words, when you look up at night and see the Big Dipper, you are not seeing it as it is, but as it was 100 years ago.
 3. Likewise, some churches are very similar. From a distance, they look bright and alive, but they are dead, and the light is only a reflection of their past.
 4. This is the situation with the church at Sardis – they looked alive, but were dead.

I. Background to the Text

- A. Sardis was one of the richest cities of the ancient world due to being the home of large gold deposits.
- B. They are said to be the first city that minted gold and silver into coins.
- C. Such a rich city needs protection.
 1. City had an elevation of 1500 feet, surrounded by sheer cliffs, with only a steep path leading to the city.
 2. They thought it was impregnable, therefore, got careless.
 3. The Persians (Cyrus) overtook it (549 B.C.) & happened again nearly 400 years later by the Greeks.

II. Jesus’ Assessment

- A. Their reputation doesn’t fit their character (Revelation 3:1).
 1. Dead churches have buildings, programs, people, but they ignore God’s word.
 2. They have a show of piety, but Jesus is not their Lord.
- B. Jesus’ instruction to the dead (Revelation 3:3)
 1. Remember, hold fast, repent.
- C. Jesus’ warning of judgment (Revelation 3:3).
- D. Jesus’ encouragement to the faithful (Revelation 3:2,4).
- E. Jesus reminds them what is at stake (Revelation 3:5).

- Conclusion:
1. He who has an ear, let him hear!
 2. My we be ever vigilant and spend more time working on our character than our reputation.