



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Sardis – A Spiritually Dead Church (Rev 3:1-6)

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*We go to great effort caring for our body which flourishes for a season, perhaps a lifetime. Most give little attention to their spirit which continues for eternity. The greatest concern must be for our spiritual health and eternal destiny (Luke 16:19-31). Jesus explained this simple truth to a leading Jewish scholar, (John 3:3-5) also to a simple Samaritan peasant (John 4:1-26). God sent His Son, Jesus to birth the age of the church. The purpose of Christ's Church is to introduce Jesus and to nourish those who believe in Him (Revelation 1:5-6). This period of enlightenment wraps up when our lifetime ends (Ecclesiastes 12:14) or at the end of the age. God calls the Church home, rapturing His people to heaven before the earth goes through the tribulation and judgment (Revelation 7:1-3).*

**How well are your being nourished spiritually?**

### INTRODUCTION

The Son of God, Jesus Christ, appeared in all His glory to the Apostle John, dictating letters to seven typical churches. Each of these letters addressed the health of the church, it's leadership, and members. Sardis (modern Sart), once the Capital City of Lydia, was built on a hilltop with steep sides and only one narrow access road rising up 1,500 feet. The people were overconfident, proud, and arrogant. However, they were conquered by stealth attack in 549 BC and again in 218 BC. The city was partly destroyed by an earthquake in AD 17. By AD 90, Sardis was decaying. People migrated out and the church succumbed to the temptations of the world around them. **Does the saga of Sardis remind you of the spiritual condition of a neighborhood church or that of some of your friends?**

### LEADERS/MEMBERS IN EPHESUS

*Revelation 3:1 "Write to the angel of the church in Sardis: Thus says the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead."*

The seven spirits of God are life giving! Seven is God's symbol for perfection, and He is the author of life (John 10:10). These seven stars refer to ministers of God's word in each of the churches addressed. **How do you ensure that your life is refreshed daily?**

### CONDEMNATION

*Revelation 3:2-3 "Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before my God. Remember, then, what you have received and heard; keep it, and repent. If you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you have no idea at what hour I will come upon you."*

The congregation had "defiled it's garments," failed its mission. It should have been a light-bearer. Neither the zealous Jews nor the idol worshipping pagans were troubling them. Like a cemetery, they were at peace with the culture. The outward works were visible. They had religious customs, ceremonies, traditions, and services, but genuine and sincere faith, hope, and love were missing. They must repent and go back! People die suddenly (Matthew 24:42-44), churches die slowly, and God gives His light to another! **What is your spiritual assessment of the church in America?**

### COMMENDATION

*Revelation 3:4 "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."*

Citizens die and their names are erased from voting records. Ancient cities sometimes removed the names of undesirable people. God knows His own! Each is a shining light in a dark world (Jude 20-23). **Do you keep in a first name relationship with our Lord?**

### EXHORTATION AND PROMISE

*Revelation 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments. I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."*

White is the symbol of purity, reserved for Christ, holy angels, and the glorified church (Revelation 19:8,14). Jesus records the name of those who trust Him (Matthew 10:32). **Does He know your name?**

### A PRAYER

Father God: Please assure me a place on your light bearer list. I pray you would reveal any soiled spots on my garments. Amen