

The Church in Sardis

Revelation 3:1-6

The diagnosis of a healthy church.

📖 Revelation 3:1a (NIV84) “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.”

📖 Revelation 3:1b (NIV84) “I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”

The autopsy of a dead church.

📖 Revelation 3:2 (NIV84) “Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.” 2

Autopsy Results

1. They were asleep.
2. They were weak.
3. They were quitting.

📖 Revelation 3:3 (NIV84) “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.”

The prognosis of a revived church.

📖 Revelation 3:4–6 (NIV84) “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 20:15 (NIV84) “If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

📖 Luke 10:20 (NIV84) “However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Digging Deeper: The church at Sardis was not a weak church in need of restoration.

👉 It was not a sick church that needed rejuvenation. It was a dead church that needed resurrection. In what ways does our church need to be revived? Do we need to strengthen what remains? Do we need to finish what we’ve started? In his book, Anatomy of a Revived Church, Thom Rainer says, “Today, three out of four churches are declining in our nation, and twenty percent of churches are close to death.” What are we doing to stay alive? What are we doing so we can live again? Death may be fatal, but it’s never final with Jesus.