

A Church on the Brink of Death

(Revelation 3:1-6)

Introduction:

1. Have you ever seen anyone who was dead, but still alive?
2. Have you ever heard the phrase, "Dead man walking?"
3. Sardis was almost dead but they lived.
4. You too, may be spiritually dead but physically alive.

I. The City that was Impossible to Conquer

- A. Sardis was a city that many thought was impossible to conquer.
 1. It was situated the base of a steep hill and the Pactulos River served as a moat.
 2. The city was invaded twice by the enemy scaling the wall to find no guards had been set.
 - a. 549 B. C. by the army of Cyprus the Persian
 - b. 218 by a Cretan
- B. The city of brought to ruin by an earthquake and later rebuilt by Tiberius.
- C. Money was thought to be first coined at Sardis.

II. The Brink of Death

- A. Sardis had a name of being alive, yet they were dead. (Verse 1)
 1. They were physically alive but Spiritually dead.
 - a. (1 Timothy 5:6)
 - b. (Ephesians 2:1-5)
- B. Sardis is told to be watchful. (Verse 2)
 1. Sardis was conquered twice because they were not watching.
 2. We told us to watch also:
 - a. Stay awake (Romans 13:11)
 - b. Watch for the devil (1 Peter 5:8)
 - c. Watch and be sober (1 Thessalonians 5:6)
- C. There were some things remaining that must be strengthened. (Verse 2)
 1. These things were ready to die, but they needed to be fortified.
- D. The works of those in Sardis were not perfect. (Verse 2)
 1. Perfect coming from the Greek word meaning complete, fulfilled.
 2. Their works have not measured up to God's standard.
- E. The remedy for their sickness: (Verse 3)
 1. Remember
 2. Hold fast
 3. Repent
- F. What if no remedy is taken? (Verse 3)
 1. Christ will come upon them when they do not expect it.
- G. The righteous in Sardis (Verse 4)
 1. There were some who had not defiled their garments.
 2. They will wear white because they are worthy.
- H. He who overcomes: (Verse 5)
 1. Shall be clothed in white (purity)
 2. Will not be blotted out of the Book of Life
 3. Will have his name confessed before God and the angels

I. Listen (Verse 6)

III. **Are you Dead or Alive?**

- A. Are you fighting the world? Are you fighting daily?
 - 1. The world will cease to fight those who are spiritually dead?
 - 2. We are in the fight of our life – fight or die! *The choice is yours.*
- B. Coming to the church building does not make you holy.
 - 1. If so, then there are some holy cockroaches.
- C. Live churches versus dead churches
 - 1. Living churches have people who bring their Bibles and use them.
 - a. Dead churches do not.
 - 2. Living churches are filled with praise and sounds of joy and thanksgiving (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
 - a. Dead churches are apathetic and lifeless.
 - 3. Living churches usually have parking problems.
 - a. Dead churches never have to worry.
 - 4. Living churches are moving out by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7).
 - a. Dead churches creep along by sight.
 - 5. Living churches have lots of children, young people, and noise.
 - a. Dead churches are as quiet as tombs.
 - 6. Living churches center on serving people.
 - a. Dead churches focus mainly on problems.
 - 7. Living churches are filled with the spirit of love for each other (Ephesians 4:15; 1 John 4:7).
 - a. Dead churches are filled with suspicious, critical and bickering people.
 - 8. Living churches are always emphasizing evangelism, discipleship and involvement (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:1-4).
 - a. Dead churches ask for little and they get it.
 - 9. Living churches have many sacrificial givers.
 - a. Dead churches only have people who “tip” the Lord.
 - 10. Living churches are always growing (*see the book of Acts*)
 - a. Dead churches are plateaued or declining

Conclusion:

- 1. The church at Sardis was almost dead. Are you dead? Almost dead?
- 2. There are some, maybe even among us, who are physically alive but spiritually dead.
 - a. It is their problem and our responsibility to help (Galatians 6:1).
- 3. If you are dead or almost dead, you can be made spiritually alive.