

REVELATION (CH. 3)

The goal of the messages of Jesus to the seven first-century churches was to challenge, encourage, warn and build up believers and churches throughout church history including our day of 2020.

The value of these messages for churches today includes: 1). A revelation of what Jesus Himself **loves** and **values** in His churches as well as what He **hates** and **condemns**. 2). Identifies the consequences of **disobedience** and **spiritual neglect** as well as the **rewards** of spiritual alertness, diligence and **faithfulness to Christ**. 3). **A standard** by which any church or individual may judge their "**true**" spiritual condition in relation to God. 4). An example of Satan's methods for attacking and working against the Church and individual Christians (Judges 3:7).

How can the Church and "you" avoid spiritual decline and the resulting judgment by Christ? (a) First and most importantly churches (you) must be **willing** to "*hear what His Spirit says*" (2:5-7, 16-17, 21), which means they (you) must **listen** and **respond with obedience** to God's "direct" message. The Word of Jesus Christ must always be the Church's **guide** (1:1-5). (b) Churches (you) must continually **examine** their (your) spiritual condition in relation to God and **His standards**. When necessary, they (you) must **correct** their (your) actions and their (your) degree of toleration of worldly and immoral beliefs and behavior among their members (2:4, 14-15, 20; 20:1-3, 14-17). Spiritual decline can be **stopped** and **corrected** in any church or individual if there is **sincere repentance** and a sincere return to the **original love**, truth, purity and power of Jesus Christ and his biblical revelation (2:5-7, 16-17; 3:1-3, 15-22).

DO NOT CONFUSE THE CHURCH WITH A BUILDING, IT'S YOU!

When you think about a church, you've got to get your mind away from a physical structure, the building, and into the reality of what a church is. A church is a gathering of people made up of the same spiritual DNA and what makes up that DNA determines the **individual's survivability**, which makes/determines a **churches survivability**.

*"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 **For in fact the body is not one member but many.**"* 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

*"**For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**"* Romans 15:4-6 (NIV)

The Church of Sardis: The Dead Church (Revelation 3:1-6)

1. Jesus Reminds You He is **Omniscient** "*All-Knowing*" (vs. 1)

Seven Spirits of God = The Completeness of the Holy Spirit Which Rested Upon Jesus

*"There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The **Spirit of the LORD** shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, The Spirit of **counsel** and **might**, The Spirit of **knowledge** and of the **fear** of the LORD." Isaiah 11:1-2*

Seven Stars: Gk. *Áγγελος* same word used both for angels or pastors (*messenger*)

Jesus Knows your True Reputation As Well As Everyone in Your Church.

*"**I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.**"* (vs. 1b)

Jesus Knows By Seeing Everything About You.

“For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light.” Luke 8:17

“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.” Hebrews 4:13 (NLT)

2. Jesus Reminds You Pay Attention (Vigilant) to Your True Spiritual Condition (vss. 2-3)

Jesus is telling these Christians, “You have been slowly dying, you have been dying for a long time and you are in fact at the point of death. – you’re mostly dead.”

Be honest. . . does this describe you? Remember, your feelings are not the gauge but your closeness to Jesus. How are you doing?

A dying or dead church is very; Self-Centered and Self-Content. That Church Has Lost Its Prophetic Voice: The Return of Jesus Christ is No Longer Taught. The Urgency to Reach the Lost is No Longer a Priority.

(BCF Mission Statement: “*Loving God Loving People Serving the World*”)

This is How You/Church Spiritually Die?

You stop being watchful/vigilant over the condition of your own heart. You stop strengthening yourself spiritually through Word and Fellowship with God and other believers. You stop remembering where you have come from and what Jesus did for you. You stop holding on to your progress. You stop repenting of your sin.

Jesus warned them/us of the great danger in failing to pay attention to our spiritual condition. If they/you ignored His command to be watchful, then Jesus would come upon them as a thief, at a time completely unexpected, whether with immediate judgment or the rapture of the Church and you will be left behind to face the Great Tribulation Period. Used in either sense, it showed He might come suddenly and unannounced, **so we must be watchful**.

Be Careful Your Overconfidence Doesn’t Lead to Neglect in Your Spiritual Life! Winston Churchill said to Britain in the early days of World War II: “*I must drop one word of caution, for next to cowardice and treachery, overconfidence leading to neglect and slothfulness, is the worst of wartime crimes.*”

“*This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.¹² The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.¹³ Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don’t participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy.¹⁴ Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don’t let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.” Romans 13:11-14 (NLT)*

3. Jesus Reminds You He Is Able to Do All Things (vss.4-6) “He Can Bring the Dead to Life!”

Jesus makes it clear that not everyone who attended the church in Sardis or in 2020 throughout the world are saved people. Not everyone inside the church are of the church.

Huge Important Question: “*Do you believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?*” or “*Do you believe that you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior?*” One of these statements is a Reality, the Other just Wishful Thinking.

There is a “Lambs” Book of Life, and it determines if you go to heaven or hell. This means the Book of Life is important.

“*And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*” (Revelation 20:15)

HAVE YOU INVITED JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE, SO YOUR NAME CAN BE WRITTEN IN THE LAMB’S BOOK OF LIFE? IF NOT. . . **TODAY IS YOUR DAY!**

What say you? Do you fit into THIS Church?