

## The Church at Sardis

### Make Sense of the Bible – what's our 'worldview'

It's all about REDEMPTION thru the BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

#### Slide One

The Old Testament saints knew a lot more than we give them credit for.  
Hebrews 9:22 - Without the shedding of blood – no forgiveness (and God doesn't change)  
Adam/Eve: (Coats of skins)  
Cain/Abel: sacrifices  
Job: sacrifices for his kids  
Abraham: Genesis 22

#### Slide 2

**Gen. 11:4-5** “the people is one” (one world government, financial system, religion)  
Satan must do the same to control all humanity – man not only rebels against God but would  
against Satan as well (free will). Astrological temple to the “hosts of heaven” [bricks?]

**Jacob's Ladder** – **Genesis 28:10-19** – Jacob rests his head on the Rock (represents Christ, see 1 Cor.  
10:4) Head on Rock, ladder from earth to heaven. Jesus is that bridge between Earth and Heaven.  
He dispatches His Holy angels for His purposes.

**John 1:51** – Nathaniel – And He \*said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven  
opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

**Romans 1:20-21** – knew God but did not honor Him (hosts of Heaven)

**Revelation 17:5** –

Leading to **Matthew 24:15** – Why does Satan want his image there? (steal God's place)

**1 Cor. 8:5-6** – many “so called gods”

Warning for Sardis and us: **covetousness associated with idolatry** (Col. 3:5; Ephesians 5:5)

It was a church at peace – but it was the peace of the dead

#### Levels of Interpretation

- 1) **The local church**: Appeared alive but spiritually dead, wake up, only a small remnant

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**Wealthy Church:** self-sufficient, self-confident, self-indulgent  
Nothing good said about it by Jesus – luxurious living for soft people  
Neither Jew nor Gentile persecuted this church (no threat to Satan's kingdom)  
Very flashy fellowship (big coffee bar in the entrance) – but just a social club  
1 Sam. 16:7 – Man looks on the outward appearance – God looks on the heart

- 2) **All churches:** don't be a church in name only (what is our purpose? - 'luchnos'=light)
- 3) **Personal (for you):** (1) are you written in the lambs book of life, (2) are you living like it?
- 4) **Church Age:** Do we deny the Word of God, do we deny the exclusivity of the gospel

**The City:** Perg cap. Of Asia Minor, Sardus capital of Lydia ("beautiful one", "noble one", "from Persian")

**Name 'Sardis':** lost it's original meaning (a name but you are dead) (vs. 1, 5)

**Location:** Thirty miles southeast of Thyatira, modern day western Turkey.

**Religion:** Cybele (the "mother of the gods")

Babylon: Semiramis.

Assyria: Ishtar

Syria and Palestine: Astarte

Egyptians: Isis;

Greece: Aphrodite:

Many attributes of the Virgin Mary make her the Christian equivalent of the Great Mother – the Queen of Heaven of the ancient Babylonian Mystery Religion. Also worshiped by Israel at points in history (Jer. 7:18; 44:25; 44:15).

**Revelation 3:1-7** – “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, and yet you are dead.’”

Interesting title of Himself. The number “7” represents fulness or completeness. Jesus is here represented as the omniscient-one. There is also, however, the contrast between life and death. Jesus is addressing a **dead church yet He is The One who grants spiritual life thru His Holy Spirit, the Seven-fold Spirit of God**. The flesh profits nothing, it is the Spirit which gives life (John 6:63).

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity – co-equally God with Father and Son...so in what sense does Jesus **'have'** the Holy Spirit. He is sent by Jesus as a love gift to those who will inherit salvation.

Father sent the Son, the Son sent the Spirit, the Spirit sent to Word

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**You have a name:** “name” [onoma – really refers to a 'label' (see verse 5 – will not erase His name)]

**Rev. 2:17** - “new name on white stone”

Christian 'label' but no life: is there fruit of the Spirit. Is there external fruit?

**but you are dead:** why would Jesus have an angel over a dead church? a remnant within the church which is spiritually alive. He always leaves a witness.

**Isaiah 29:13** – **Then the Lord said,** “Because this people approaches *Me* with their words And honors *Me* with their lips, But their heart is far away from *Me*, And their reverence for *Me* consists of *the* commandment of men that is taught;

**Matthew 7:13-14** – “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

**Matthew 7:21-23** – “Not everyone who says to *Me*, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of *My* Father who is in heaven *will enter*. Many will say to *Me* on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in *Your* name, and in *Your* name cast out demons, and in *Your* name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; LEAVE *ME*, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’

**2 Timothy 3:1-5** – But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to **a form of godliness** although they have denied **its power**; avoid *such people as* these.

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**2 Wake up, and strengthen** the things that remain, which were **about to die**; for I have not found your deeds **completed** in the sight of *My* God.

“Be watchful! Wake up!” The “sentries” were asleep!  
watchman- Isaiah 29:10, 14; 56:10

In two of seven churches Jesus has nothing good to say – this church and Laodicia

**The cure for spiritual laziness and routine religion is to focus on the suddenness of Jesus return, the doctrine of imminence**

A remnant of dedicated people existed even in a dying church

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**Be watchful:** Matthew 25:1-13; Romans 13:11; 1 Cor. 16:13-14; 1 Thess. 5:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Peter 5:8

**Wake up shepherds** Ezekiel 34:8-10 – “As I live,” declares the Lord God, “certainly, because My flock has become plunder, and My flock has become food for all the animals of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock, therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: ‘This is what the Lord God says: “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them stop tending sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will save My sheep from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.”’”

**Watchful of what** (Our enemy is very real – so is the warfare)

**Satan's Schemes:** 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Cor. 2:11 – so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

**Temptation:** Matt. 26:41 – Keep watching and praying, so that you do not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

**Jesus Coming:** 2 Tim. 4:8 – in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**False Teachers:** Acts 20:28-31 – Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God [Ephesus] which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

**Strengthen the things that remain**

- 1) doctrine of grace thru faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9)  
False gospels today: universalism, prosperity, no hell, no sin, social justice, etc.
- 2) Innerency of scripture
- 3) Depravity of man
- 4) Blood of Christ

**Deeds not complete**

- 1) Growing in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18)

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- 2) Our ambassadorship (2 Cor. 5:20)
- 3) Exercising the 'Keys to the Kingdom' (Matt. 16:19; Rev. 1:18)

**4** But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

**Romans 11:5-6** – So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

### Romans 11:1, 25

**walk:** [Gr. '*peripateo*']: walk represents the course of our life, that which occupies us).  
God calls on us to walk 'with Him'.

Adam/Eve: Genesis 3:8

Enoch: Gen. 5:21-24

Abraham: Genesis 13:17

Israel in wilderness: Joshua 5:6, Exodus 33:14-15

Two disciples on Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-15

Jesus among the lampstands: Revelation 2:1

**5** The one who overcomes will be clothed the same way, in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

**Overcomes** **1 John 5:4-5** – For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

**1 John 5:13** -- I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

### Clothed

**Zechariah 3:1-5** – Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right to accuse him. 2 And the Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a log snatched from the fire?” 3 Now Joshua was clothed in filthy garments and was standing before the angel. 4 And he responded and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your guilt away from you and will clothe you with festive robes.” 5 Then I said, “Have them put a clean headband on his head.” So they put the clean headband on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.

**WHAT ABOUT “erasing or BLOTTING OUT”:** “blot out” [in Rome – people were blotted out

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from the governmental registry and, therefore, the public roles due to death or disenfranchisement

### Can you lose salvation?

**John 10:28-29** – My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

**Romans 8:35-39** – Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or trouble, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 Just as it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We were regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing (that includes you) will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is not a promise with conditions attached: “If you do this, God will do that.” This security in Christ is an established fact

(1) actually born again to begin with, and, (2) the loss of eternal rewards in heaven

**Romans 5:1, 8:1** – Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Therefore there is now no condemnation at all for those who are in Christ Jesus.

While we were still sinners Christ died for us. Our sins are covered by Christ's blood past, present and future. Is His blood sufficient. To process I must keep myself secure by living righteously is just another form of works righteousness. If the “security” of mankind's salvation was up to man – none of us would ever find ourselves in HEAVEN.

### Churches thus far . . .

**Ephesus:** good on doctrine, good on works BUT lost their “first love”, city was a great political center

**Smyrna:** 'myrrh' (death) – The suffering church is closest to Jesus, city was a great commercial center

**Pergamom:** Satan's Throne, city was a great religious center

**Thyatira:** Tolerated Jezebel – false doctrine and worldliness, Satan infiltrated from within

**Sardis:** Thought they were alive but are dead – only a faithful remnant.