

Revelation 3.1-6



Revelation

- Author: John
- Apocalyptic Literature- details the authors' visions of the end times/end of the age as revealed by an angel or other heavenly messenger
- 7 Churches: Revelation 1.20

Sardis

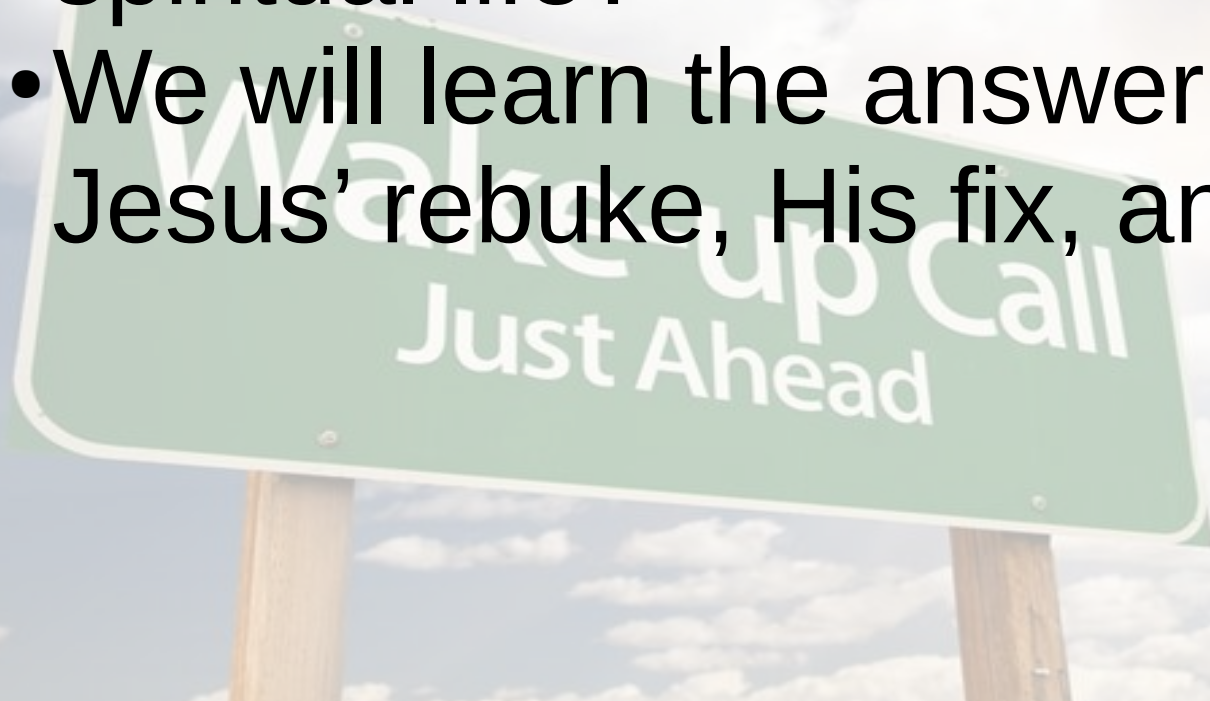
- Approximately 40 miles southeast of Thyatira
- Sardis was a busy center of trade and traffic leading to wealth and prosperity
- It had the reputation as a “great city”
- In 6th century it was named the capital city of Lydia
- Sardis was destroyed due to lack of protection and earthquakes

Church in Sardis

- Tragically, the church in Sardis reflects the history of the city. The church had begun well but its glory days were behind it
- Revelation 3.1-6
- It still had a great outward reputation but inside was dead
- It was well known in the city and by other churches

Question For Today

- How can we experience an authentic spiritual life?
- We will learn the answer as we look at Jesus' rebuke, His fix, and His reward



The Rebuke

- “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead”
- The church is well known by the community or other churches
- Jesus sees right through the outward appearance.. “You are dead”
- The church appears very respectable but they are asleep

The Rebuke

- The only hint of trouble is found in v.4 **“Few people who have not soiled their garment”** (hidden sin)
- They have a form of Godliness but no power (2 Tim 3.5)
- **“I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God”** Their activities were not “complete”
- They seem to care more for the praise of men than God

Outward Appearance or Heart?

- We evaluate by the outward appearance but God evaluates from the Heart
- What about us?
- If we are not careful we can be alive to the people around us but dead to God
- You could just have the reputation

The Fix

- Fortunately, Jesus doesn't just give a rebuke, he also provides a fix
- “Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die”
- “Wake up” can also be translated “watch”
- They failed to be on guard against lifeless christianity
- “Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent”

The Reward

- We have seen the rebuke, the fix, and now the reward in verse 4
- Those who hear the rebuke and look to fix it will also walk with Jesus in white
- “... And I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before angels”
- The reputation was short lived in light of eternity

The Reward

- The time for honoring ourselves will soon come to an end
- We may use our religious performance, athletic ability, physical looks, academic credentials, business accomplishments, or parenting success to gain the approval of men. But its short-lived

Conclusion

- The Church in Sardis struggled with Matthew 6.1
- They had the reputation but not the reality
- Maybe it is time for us to have that wake-up call
- Revelation 3.6- He who has an ear, let him hear
- When are we going to wake up and take our Christianity back?