

A Study Of The Book Of Revelation

July 19, 2020

Resources used:

- A Study Of The Book Of Revelation by Bob Dodson
- More Than Conquerors by William Hendriksen
- Overcoming With The Lamb, Florida College Annual Lectures, February 7-10, 1994
- Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary by Homer Hailey
- Revelation (Truth Commentaries) by Robert Harkrider
- Revelation (A Study Workbook) by Robert Harkrider
- Revelation by Donnie Rader
- Studies In The Book Of Revelation by Ferrell Jenkins
- The Old Testament In The Book Of Revelation by Ferrell Jenkins
- The Revelation Of Saint John The Divine by G.B. Caird
- The Book of Revelation by Foy E. Wallace
- The Avenging of the Apostles and Prophets by Arthur M. Ogden
- Worthy Is The Lamb by Ray Summers
- Written exchange on "The Domitian Persecution" between Arthur M. Ogden and Ferrell Jenkins presented in Searching The Scriptures, June 12, 1989, pages 7;12

Revelation 3:1-6

"Letter to the Church at Sardis"

The Church That Was Dead

- I. Identification of the Author (verse 1)
- II. Commendation (verses 2, 4)
- III. Condemnation (verses 1, 3)
- IV. Plea to Repent (verse 3)
- V. Promise if they Overcome (verses 5-6)

Letters To Seven Church of Asia (Revelation 2-3)

- Some were **good** (Smyrna, Philadelphia)
- Some were **good / bad** (Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis)
- One was **bad** (Laodicea)

Letters To Seven Church of Asia (Revelation 2-3)



- Most of us would like to be in GOOD church (no condemnation)
- None of us would have anything to do with a BAD church (no commendation)
- Reality: may be in a church that is GOOD / BAD (Some commendation and some condemnation)

The Church At Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6)

May have been shocked – To learn they were dead!

Dear Sardis,
You think
you're alive,
but you're
dead.

Yet – they had
many desirable
qualities

Revelation 3:1-6

**S
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- Capital of Lydia.
- 50 miles east of Smyrna.
- 70 miles southeast of Pergamum.
- Great commercial city.
- Strong military position.
- The city where production of money coins began.
- The city of Sardis was also notorious for its pleasures and luxury loving spirit.
 - The wealthier the city became, the more decadent its citizens grew.
- Had prominent temples.

Revelation 3:1-6

**S
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- Sardis was a city confident of its security.
 - Located on a narrow ridge of rock jutting from Mount Tmolus, this city seemed to be an impregnable fortress. Except for the one entrance from the south, the other three sides of this plateau were bounded by smooth, apparently unscalable mountain rock rising perpendicularly 1500 feet above the plain.



Revelation 3:1-6

Sardis was a city confident of its security.

"The Greek historian Herodotus gave an account of how the Persian king, Cyrus, captured Sardis in 549 B.C. (*Herodotus 1.84*). He offered a reward to his troops to any man who found a way to penetrate what seemed to be an unscalable mountain. One of his men observed that a Lydian soldier on the rampart above accidentally dropped his helmet down the mountainside. The Lydian soldier carefully picked his way down through a narrow crevice to recover his helmet and climbed back again. That night the observant Persian soldier led a band of men up the cliffs by the way he had meticulously marked in his memory. They found the battlements completely unguarded because the Lydian king never thought anyone could find a way up the side of the steep cliffs. Sardis felt completely safe and secure, but that night the city fell to the enemy." (Harkrider, page 130)

**AUTHOR DESCRIBED**

- "Seven spirits of God." (cf. 1:4)
- "Seven stars." (1:16, 20)
 - Revelation 3:1
- Spirit in "full measure"
 - John 3:34
 - Colossians 2:9
- Had perfect insight into their problems.

Revelation 3:1-6

A Dead Church
Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

“The socially distinguished congregation there was a spiritual graveyard.” (Graham, page 22)

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

A. Good Reputation (verse 1, cf. 2 Timothy 3:5)

1. *Might be based on:*

- Past stand
- Members that are known
- Preacher they had or have
- How they stood on one issue

Reputation versus character.

- God's view is crystal clear
- God sees in the heart
- He knows motives and true character

1 Samuel 16:7

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

Good Reputation (verse 1, cf. 2 Timothy 3:5)

Reputation versus character.

- God's view is crystal clear
- God sees in the heart
- He knows motives and true character

1 Samuel 16:7

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

A. Good Reputation (verse 1)

- Some churches live on a name*
 - What they were in the past
 - Doctrinal stand on the issue of the day
- Possible to have a lot that is right – still be wrong*
- Possible that churches can change – they had*
- Churches are not always as they appear!*

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

A. Good Reputation (verse 1)
B. An Active Program (verse 1)

- They had works – yet dead
- Not enough to be busy – must be lawful (Matthew 7:22-23; 2 John 9)

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

A. Good Reputation (verse 1)
B. An Active Program (verse 1)

- Not enough to be busy at just some things (verse 2)
 - Matthew 23:23
 - Good Bible class program – yet don't withdraw
 - Personal evangelism program – yet soft
 - Support many preachers – yet have worldliness
 - Building program – yet neglect spiritual

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

- A. Good Reputation (verse 1)**
- B. An Active Program (verse 1)**
- C. A Peaceful Atmosphere**
 - 1. *No evidence of division or strife*
 - 2. *Peace must not be toleration of **sin***
(1 Corinthians 5)
 - 3. *Peace must not be toleration of **error***
(2 Timothy 4:1-5; Revelation 2:20)

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

- A. Good Reputation (verse 1)**
- B. An Active Program (verse 1)**
- C. A Peaceful Atmosphere**
 - 4. *Peace must not be from **indifference***
(Revelation 3:16-17)
 - a. Sin is no problem to those who don't care
 - b. Error doesn't matter to those who are apathetic
 - 5. *Some love peace and harmony over truth!*

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

- A. Good Reputation (verse 1)**
- B. An Active Program (verse 1)**
- C. A Peaceful Atmosphere**
- D. Some Good Members (verse 4)**
 - 1. *Good members will not answer for sins of others*
 - 2. *Good members will not remove the sins of others*
 - 3. *Good members at Corinth didn't mean there were not serious problems*
(1 Corinthians 5, 6)

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Revelation 3:1-6

I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death

- A. Good Reputation (verse 1)**
- B. An Active Program (verse 1)**
- C. A Peaceful Atmosphere**
- D. Some Good Members (verse 4)**
 - 4. *Good members can remain good – in spite of others*
 - 5. *Good members can change – as others influence them* (1 Corinthians 5:6)

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Revelation 3:1-6

A Dead Church
Revelation 3:1-6

- I. Good Qualities That Did Not Prevent Death**
- II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life**

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Revelation 3:1-6

II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life

- A. Be Watchful (verses 2-3)**
 - 1. *Lost their ground by carelessness – time to wake up!* (Romans 13:11-14)
 - 2. *Take a look at where you are and where it will lead.*

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Revelation 3:1-6

II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life**A. Be Watchful (verses 2-3)**

1. In 546 BC Croesus, the Lydian king, and Sardis fell to Cyrus and the Persians.
2. In 334 BC the city surrendered willingly to Alexander the Great.
3. In 214 Sardis fell to Antiochus Epiphanes through similar tactics of the Persians.

Similar warnings given by Jesus. Matthew 24:42-43; Luke 12:39; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:2

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Revelation 3:1-6

II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life

Be Watchful (verses 2-3). Dead may not be hopelessly lost! God holds out hope for those who seek it. Key thought here!

1 Corinthians 16:13

3. *"Whenever we are off our watch, we lose ground, and therefore must return to our watchfulness against sin, and Satan, and whatever is destructive to the life and power of godliness."* (Matthew Henry, Commentary In One Volume, Page 2468)
4. *Be on guard – be alert to the dangers!*
5. *Look back and see how we've changed!*

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Revelation 3:1-6

CHRISTIANS MUST BE WATCHFUL!

"Temptations."

- Must avoid "appearance of evil"
- Never yield! 1 Corinthians 10:13

"Devil tricks."

- He is cunning and crafty
- Never give him a proverbial inch! 2 Corinthians 2:11

"False teachers."

- Seek to mislead us
- Compromise God's truth 1 John 4:1

Revelation 3:1-6

CHRISTIANS MUST BE WATCHFUL!

"Coming of the Lord."

- Need to be prepared
- Uncertainty of time 2 Peter 3:10

"On guard."

- Making wise choices
- Not arrogant
- Resist pride Ephesians 5:14-15

Revelation 3:1-6

II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life**A. Be Watchful (verses 2-3)****B. Strengthen Things That Remain (verse 2)**

1. *Use and exercise the strength you have!*
2. *May refer to persons – Warn and strengthen them lest they become like the rest*
3. *More likely refers to deeds – love, faith, service you have – strengthen these lest they die too*
4. *Had started – had not continued*

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Revelation 3:1-6

II. Preventing Death / Reviving Life

Revelation 3:2, *"for I have found no works of thine perfected before my God."*

- The Galatians had started, but not finished. Galatians 5:7
- The Corinthians had started a collection, but had not finished. 2 Corinthians 9:2-5
- Some do not finish, because they have not counted the cost. Luke 14:28
- Some do not finish, because they have no clear goal. Philippians 3:14; Hebrews 12:1-2

(Ferrell Jenkins, Studies In The Book Of Revelation, Page 62)

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