

***“Victory Of Christ”
To The Church In Sardis
Revelation 3:1-6***

Introduction:

1. Let's Open Up Our Bibles:
 - To Revelation 3:
 - As We Continue Looking At:
 - Jesus' Message To The Church:
 - In The Ancient City Of Sardis!
2. Last Sunday:
 - We Started Looking:
 - The Ancient City Of Sardis - And:
 - The Church That:
 - Met There - And Was Addressed:
 - By Jesus - As:
 - A **“Dying” Church!**
 - And - If You Remember:
 - The Church Was Starting To:
 - Take On Some Of The Same Characteristics:
 - As The Fallen Culture Of The City:
 - Especially Its Pride!
3. Because - If You Recall:
 - Even Though The City Of Sardis:
 - Was A Strong City!
 - Because Of Its Situation:
 - Just Under Towering Peaks Of:
 - What Seemed To Be An Impenetrable Mountain! And:
 - Even Though The City Of Sardis:
 - Was A Rich City!
 - Because Of Its Golden Sands:
 - That It Was Known For:
 - Centuries Before The Church Was Founded! And:
 - Even Though The City Of Sardis:
 - Was An Influential City!
 - Because Of Its Location:
 - At The Crossroads Of Some Very Important Trade Routes!
 - In Spite Of All:
 - That The City Of Sardis:
 - Had Going For It:
 - Their Strengths Became Their Weakness:
 - Through Pride!
4. Well - Apparently The Church:
 - Had Not Distanced Itself Enough:
 - From The Culture Of The City:
 - And Became Spiritually Complacent:
 - And Proud As Well!
 - Which Is Why:
 - In 3:1 - Jesus Commissions John To:
 - “Write” - “Unto The Angel Of The Church In Sardis” - These Attention Getting Words:
 - “These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead!”
 - From This Commission:
 - Let's Read The Rest Of This Brief Letter:
 - From 3:2-6!
5. So Far - We've Considered:
 - Three Of The Main Parts:
 - Of This Letter - Including:
 - **Jesus' Commission!**
 - Jesus' Character! And:

- Jesus' Comprehension:
 - Of The Church!
- And - When It Came To:
 - Jesus' Comprehension:
 - We Noted That This Is The First Time Where:
 - The Challenge:
 - Faced By The Church:
 - Is Placed Before:
 - Any Commendations:
 - To The Church!
- 6. And So - The Church In Sardis:
 - Was In A Serious Condition!
 - They Were Alive:
 - In "Name" Only!
 - But - In Many Ways:
 - They Were Dying!
 - Perhaps - With Even Most:
 - Of Their Members:
 - Spiritual Dead & Lost:
 - To God & The Gospel!
 - Because - Just Like We Are Familiar With:
 - It Is Possible To Be:
 - A Member Of A Visible Church:
 - And Not Be:
 - A True Member Of The Body Of Christ!
 - 7. But - Not Every One - Or:
 - Every Part Of The Church In Sardis:
 - Was Utterly Dead!
 - Because Of The Brief Commendations:
 - That We Find In:
 - Verse 2 & 4!
 - Because - In 3:2:
 - There Were Still Some Things:
 - In The Church That:
 - "Remained!"
 - And Also - In 3:4:
 - There Were Still:
 - "A Few Names" Who:
 - "Have Not Defiled Their Garments!"
 - 8. And So - It Is To:
 - This Remnant:
 - Of Faithful Members:
 - In The Church Of Sardis:
 - That We Find The Fourth Part Of The Letter Addressed!
 - Which Is:
 - 4. **Jesus' Commands:**
 - To The Church!
 - And - As We Briefly Mentioned Last Week:
 - We Find In 3:2 - 3:3a:
 - Five Specific Commands / Imperatives:
 - That The Faithful Members Are Called To Obey!
 - The First Command Is:
 - **"Be Watchful!" (3:2)**
 - Which Meant That:
 - They Needed To Start Paying Attention:
 - To Their Condition - And:
 - Their Surroundings!
 - To Look Out For Things:
 - Both - On The Outside - And:

- On The Inside!
- And - They Needed To Realize That:
 - What Whatever They Thought:
 - Might Have Been Their Strongest Points:
 - May, In Fact, Have Been The Source Of Their Greatest Weakness:
 - Which - Is Still Pride!
 - But - To Just “Watch” Was Not Enough!
 - This “Watching” Needed To Be:
 - Followed Up With:
- The Second Command - Which Is:
 - **“Strengthen!” (3:2)**
 - Even - “Strengthen The Things Which Remain!”
 - We Are Not Told What Things:
 - Remained - But It Is Clear That:
 - They Were Small Things, Ready To Die!
 - And So - If There Was Even:
 - An Ember Of Spiritual Life:
 - In Their Services & Ministries:
 - They Needed To Focus On That:
 - And Fan The Flame:
 - So That The Fire Might Grow!
 - Jesus Even Tells The Church:
 - There In 3:2 That:
 - “I Have Not Found Thy Works Perfect Before God!”
 - So - They Needed To Go Back To The Basics:
 - As A Church - And Strengthen Those Things:
 - In Order To Complete What God Had For Them!
 - And, More Than Likely, Part Of:
 - The Strengthening Process:
 - Involved:
 - The Third Command - Which Is:
 - **“Remember!” (3:3)**
 - And - What Was It:
 - That They Needed To Remember?
 - “How Thou Hast Received And Heard!”
 - This Is Most Likely Talking About:
 - The Word Of God:
 - That Was Given Them:
 - To Establish Them In The Gospel As Christians & As A Church:
 - In The First Place!
 - And - They Needed To Remember:
 - God’s Grace:
 - In That They:
 - “Received” God’s Message!
 - And - They Needed To Remember:
 - God’s Truth:
 - And All That They:
 - “Heard” From God’s Messengers!
 - So - Obviously:
 - They Had Forgotten:
 - So Much Of What It Meant & Took:
 - To Be A Living Church:
 - For The Glory Of God!
 - And - They Needed To:
 - “Remember” It - And Then:
 - Obey:
 - The Fourth Command - Which Is:
 - **“Hold Fast!” (3:3)**
 - The Greek Word Is:
 - τηρέω - Which Is A Word:

- That We Will Meet Again:
 - In Our Study Of Revelation!
- But - Its Basic Meaning Is:
 - To Guard & To Carefully:
 - Take Care Of Something!
- And - In This Case:
 - They Were Supposed To:
 - Guard & Preserve:
 - The Grace & Truth:
 - Which They Would Remember!
 - And - To Do So:
 - As If What They Received:
 - Was Their Greatest Treasure:
 - In All The World!
- And - If They Would Obey:
 - All Of These Commands:
 - It Would Stir Their Hearts:
 - To Obey:
- The Fifth Command - Which Is:
 - **"Repent!" (3:3)**
 - Which Again - Means To:
 - Change Your Mind About Things:
 - Which Will, In Turn, Change Your Very Attitudes & Actions:
 - About Things!
 - Its Interesting That:
 - "Repent" Is Put As The Last Command:
 - In This List!
 - Perhaps Its Because:
 - They Had Forgotten:
 - Much Of The Difference Between:
 - Right & Wrong!
- And So - These Five Commands:
 - Were Given By The Lord:
 - To Bring This Dying Church:
 - Back To Life - So That:
 - It Might Grow Once Again!
 - But - Along With These Commands:
 - The Lord Gives The Church:
 - A Warning As Well!
 - Which Is Something That Is Also Common In All Of These Letters!
 - Because It Is:

5. **Jesus' Consequence:**

- To The Church:
 - There In 3:3 - "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a **thief**; and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee!"
 - This Is A Familiar Phrase:
 - That Jesus Himself Used:
 - When He Was Talking About His Second Coming:
 - In Matthew 24!
 - Where - Jesus Said - In 24:42-42:
 - "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. / But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. / Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh!"
- So - To Those Who Are Not:
 - Watching - Jesus Will Return:
 - As A Thief!
 - Which Means - In An Unexpected Way & At An Unexpected Time!
 - This Is Something That Is:

- Repeated Elsewhere In The New Testament As Well!
- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 - "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. / For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. / For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. / But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. / Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. / Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober!"
 - 2 Peter 3:9-11 - "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. / But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. / Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, / Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"
 - Revelation 16:15 - "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame!"
- So - From These Passage:
 - It Is Those Who Are Faithless Or Unfaithful:
 - To The Lord:
 - Who Will Experience The Coming Of Christ In The Way He Describes:
 - "As A Thief!"
 - And So - Back In 3:3:
 - Jesus Urges The Church As A Whole:
 - To Comply With His Commands:
 - And "Be Watchful!"
 - Because A Watchful Church:
 - Is A Living Church!
 - And - This Leads Us To The Sixth Part Of The Letter:

6. **Jesus' Comfort:**

- To The Church - And Especially:
 - To The Ones Who In 3:4:
 - Are Described As The "Few Names" Who:
 - "Have Not Defiled Their Garments!"
 - And The Comfort Is:
 - Their Reward In Heaven:
 - 3:4 - "They Shall Walk With Me In White, For They Are Worthy!"
 - Now - This Clothing:
 - Is Interpreted For Us Elsewhere:
 - In Revelation - 19:7-8!
 - It's The Clothing Of The Lamb's Wife!
 - "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. / And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints!"
 - So - One Day:
 - The Great Challenges To:
 - Righteousness:
 - That We Face Down Here:
 - Will Be No More!
 - And - Not Only Will We Be:
 - Righteous In The Sense:
 - Of Justification!
 - In Our Position Before God!
 - We Will Also Be:
 - Righteous In The Sense:
 - Of Sanctification!
 - In Our Practice Before God!
 - And Its All Because:
 - Jesus Christ Is Himself:
 - Our Righteousness!

- And - He Makes Us Into What We Will Be!
- Eternally Pure & Holy!

- And So - For Those Who:

- "Overcome" In The Church In Sardis:

- They Will Receive The Same Comfort:

- As Those Who Have Been Faithful!

- 3:5 - "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels!"

- And So - Here Is Three:

- Promises Of Comfort!

- The First Promise:

- Is The Promise To Experience:

- **The Eternal Spotlessness Of Christ!**

- 3:5a - "He That Overcometh, The Same Shall Be Clothed In White Raiment!"

- Their Original "Garments" - Were:

- Soiled Garments - Which Is:

- A Symbol Of The Stains Of:

- Sin & Unrighteousness!

- And Points Back To:

- Verses Like Isaiah 64:6:

- "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags!"

- But They Too Can REceive:

- Spotless Garments - Which Would Be:

- White & Clean - Which Are:

- Symbols Of True Righteousness!

- Even The Righteousness Of God Himself!

- The Second Promise - To The Church In Sardis:

- Is The Promise To Experience:

- **The Eternal Salvation Of Christ!**

- 3:5b - "And I Will Not Blot Out His Name Out Of The Book Of Life!"

- Elsewhere In Revelation:

- We Learn That This Is:

- An Eternal Record - That Was Recorded Even - "From The Foundation Of The World!" (13:7 & 17:8)

- The Third Promise - To The Church In Sardis:

- Is The Promise To Experience:

- **The Eternal Sanction Of Christ!**

- That Is - His Personal & Open

Acknowledgment & Approval Of His People!

- But - Once Again:

- These Promises Are Not Just Meant For:

- The Church In Sardis Alone!

- They Are For Every Church!

- So - Once Again - In 3:6 We Have:

7. **Jesus' Call:**

- "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!"

- Because - We Must Remember That:

- A Message To One:

- Is A Message To All!

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