

Intro. Sardis - Croesus. Cyrus 549 B.C., Antiochus the Great. 218 B.C. Not watchful. Citizens aroused from lethargy too late. 3 received mixed praise and blame, 2 only praise, 2 only blame.

Observe the language of the letter and note:

① Evaluation, ② Admonition and ③ threat, reference to faithful few, ④ Beautiful promise. Rev. 3:1-6.

→ I Two divine attributes of Writer: "Seven Spirits" (Jno. 3:34, Col 2:9). "Seven stars" (Rev. 1:20).

As in each of others, the title assumed by the Son of God has especial reference to the need and condition of the congregation. Full power of the spirit, with his ministers of the word, he was able to (1) convict of sin (Acts 8:22) (2) Reveal the hollow profession that prevailed (Jno. 7:24, Mt. 7:20) (3) Revive a dead congregation.

MT. 23:27-28

II The Evaluation:

A. The World: Reputation and actual condition did not coincide. Illusion of life referred to in other places (I Tim. 5:6, Matt. 8:22). Could be true in any church. What gave her this reputation? Outward signs of life.

1. Large membership, incl. people of wealth and prominence: cuts no ice with the Lord (I Cor. 26-31). Renounce the world for Christ (Lk. 14:33) Smart folks (I Cor. 1:18-21)

2. Fine building and evidence of material wealth. Pride in meagre accomplishments (rest on laurels) will poison the spirit of Christ.

*organization
slavish and*

cor (Jas. 2:1-13) "TAKE UP CROSS DAILY"

3. Attractive ritual: (Jno. 4:24)

4. Sound teaching: (Tit. 2:1) desirable, but soundness alone, like faith alone is dead. (Note. (Ephesus), Pergamum, Thyatira)

5. Moral purity: May have thanked God not like others (Lk. 18:11-12). But lacking humility and zeal they were dead (Rom. 6:23)

B. The Almighty: He was not deceived by their pious fraud. Self satisfied, professing righteousness - able to word long poetic prayers but dead inside. Their one real trouble was they couldn't see their own sin. Men said "She is alive." God says "She is Dead." Imagine their feelings - so accustomed to praise and back-patting to be the verdict. Activities were still present, some works remained but were "ready to die."

1. As in animals we may see muscular movement after life is gone, so Sardis was dead and all that remained were the ghastly twitchings of a corpse. As evidence of her beliefs ~~state no~~ persecutions. Why should Satan and his cohorts trouble themselves with a corpse? (II Tim. 3:12)

*I. 2. 5:6
Lk. 15:24
Ro. 6:13
Ep. 2:1, 5*

Gr. Power "The feet of the avenging
deities are shod with wool."

2. Reason. No work perfect, uncompleted task (Eph. 2:10, II Thess. 1:11) Before God don't get the idea that the Lord doesn't make strenuous demands (Matt. 7:21-23) Doing just enough to get by (Gal. 6:7). To go half-way to heaven is to miss it altogether. Simply had not gone to the outer limit of their capacity. Many churches and individual Christians stand accused here. In preaching, teaching, benevolence, love to all the saints and forgiving power. Ask yourself, can it be me?

III Admonition and threat

A. "BE Watchful." City had twice fallen because of lack of watchfulness - how appropriate.

(Mk. 13:36-37). Watch:

1. Affections. Allow them not to cling to an idol, nor to reach out for things forbidden (Jas. 4:4)
2. The Tempter: (I Pet. 5:8)
3. Bitterness: (Heb. 12:14-15)

¾ B. "Strengthen" Both works and weak members. Repair the breeches in the walls. Must grow or die. How? (I Pet. 2:2, II Pet. 3:18). Strengthen:

1. Meditate on word of God, reflect, clean house.
2. Pray (I Tim. 2:8)
3. Engage in public and private devotion
4. Assemble regularly (Heb. 10:25)
5. Lend a helping hand (I Jno. 3:16)
 - a. Spiritually, love and succor (Gal. 6:2)
 - b. Physically, supply things needful (Gal. 6:10)

C. "Remember" (cf. Rev. 2:5, Lk. 15:17-18).

"How" (Col. 2:1, Acts 8:8, 8:39, Phil. 4:4)

The joyful, eager enthusiasm had cooled. Some have nothing to remember. (Ps. 51:12)

D. "Repent" (Lk. 13:3, II Cor. 7:10). Lord give us more sorrow for waywardness, negligence and outright sins.

E. "Threat" I will sneak soundlessly upon you and devour you in the flame of my wrath" (I Th. 5:3)

Re: 7:14
IV The faithful few. Had not followed the majority (Mt. 7:13-14) They are the salt that saved the dead body from rottenness (Matt. 5:13). They had not spotted their garments, donned at baptism were not stained with sin (Jas. 1:27). (Quote from Cox.)

Their promise:

A. Progress: "They shall walk" Had walked upon earth; golden streets.

B. Fellowship: "With me" (cf. Noah, Enoch, so a few in Sardis walked with God and in bright realms of deathless day would continue their walk on more intimate terms.)

V. The final appeal: Tho dead, they need not remain that way. (Eph. 5:14, II Pet. 3:9) It is possible for any and all to wrench himself free of the clutches of death. "To him that over cometh" thru His power.

^{3/4} A. White robe: Heavens color, a symbol of purity (Isa. 1:18, Rev. 7:14) Who does not overcome, converse.

De. 29:20
Ge. 32:32-33
69:28
B. His name will stay in the book of life - When one becomes a member of God's family, his name is transcribed in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Cause ^{8:4:3} for joy (Lk. 10:20) But if one does not remain faithful, his name is blotted out (Rev. 20:15)

C. His name confessed (Matt. 10:32) ^{21:27}

VI We can parade before the world in hypocrisy and be thought "all right" and still be irreversably bound for the "lake of fire." Behold your sin, repent and confess it, praying God for ~~pp~~ardon - public, confess public.

A. And you sinner friend, outside the mercy of God, why will you linger there - (I Cor. 12:13, Heb. 12:23)

V. The final result: "I feel that they need not remain
that way. (Matt. 23:13) It is possible
for any and all to reach himself free of the
circles of death. "He that will overcome" this
his power.
A. While Robert Lee, a symbol of justice
(Isa. 1:18. Rev. 7:14) who does not overcome,
converses.
B. His name will be written down of life - when
he becomes a member of God's family. His name
is inscribed in heaven (Rev. 19:12). "Come"
for joy (Rev. 19:14) but if one does not remain
faithful, his name is blotted out (Rev. 19:15).
C. His name is blotted out (Rev. 19:15).
VI We can escape before the world is hypocritical and
be thought "all right" and still be irreversibly
bound for the "lake of fire." "Behold your sin,"
repent and confess it, press to God for pardon -
public, confess public.
A. And you sinners friend, outside the mercy
of God, why will you linger there - (1 Cor. 13:
13, 14:12-13)