

## THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

The Church at Sardis – Part I

Reference: **Revelation 3:1-6**

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ONE...the church at **Ephesus** “The **Loveless** Church”

Reference: **Revelation 2:1-7**

TWO...the church at **Smyrna** “The **Persecuted** Church”

Reference: **Revelation 2:8-11**

THREE...the church at **Pergamos** (Pergamum) “The **Compromised** Church

Reference: **Revelation 2:12-17**

FOUR...the church at **Thyatira** “The **Corrupt** Church”

Reference: **Revelation 2:18-29**

FIVE... the church at **Sardis** “The **Dead** Church”

Reference: **Revelation 3:1-6**

**verse one** (see screen)

CONDEMNATION:

**verse one** continued (see screen)

This word “*works*” is a generic term and it means \_\_\_\_\_.

Three words to remember in relation to the situation at Sardis:

- \_\_\_\_\_ is what we **think** we are.  
Reference: **Proverbs 16:18** (see screen)
- \_\_\_\_\_ is what others **think** we are.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is what God **knows** we are.

**verse one** continued (see screen)

**Life Cycle of a Church:**

Stage One: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stage Two: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stage Three: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stage Four: \_\_\_\_\_ and then \_\_\_\_\_  
Stage Five: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stage Six: almost \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

COUNSEL:

Five Basic Commands:

COMMAND NUMBER ONE

**verse two**, “Be \_\_\_\_\_.”

**Background:** Sardis was located on a hill approximately 1500 feet above a valley floor that was adjacent to a large mountain. The ancient city of Sardis was fortified. It was extremely difficult to approach from any direction because of the mountainous walls around three of its sides and the difficulty in climbing the steep ravine from the south. The people in Sardis started feeling extremely secure and became over confident, so much so, that they did not use an adequate number of soldiers to guard their city. Sardis was captured by the Persian Army because the people didn't watch. Three and a-half centuries later that exact same thing happened again.

Charles Swindoll mentions four signs of certain inevitable death for a church:

- One** is an unreasonable fondness for the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Two** is a greater concern for \_\_\_\_\_ than for what counts.
- Three** is resistance to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Four** is losing our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ emphasis.

COMMAND NUMBER TWO

**verse two** continued, “...and \_\_\_\_\_ the things which remain, that are ready to die...”

**verse two** continued (see screen)

COMMAND NUMBER THREE

**verse three**, “\_\_\_\_\_ therefore how you have received and heard...”

COMMAND NUMBER FOUR

**verse three** continued, “...\_\_\_\_\_.”

COMMAND NUMBER FIVE

**verse three** continued, “...and \_\_\_\_\_.”

**verse three** continued (see screen)

Jesus said He would come on this church “as a *thief*” and that meant He would react to that congregation in \_\_\_\_\_.

**Matthew 24:43** and **I Thessalonians 5:2** both mention that Jesus is going to return to this earth as “a *thief in the night*” (i.e. the revelation phase of Christ's return). Even though Jesus return is sometimes described as “a *thief in the night*”, I don't believe that this phrase from **verse three** is a reference to His return. Instead, it is a reference to Jesus coming in judgement on this Sardis congregation.

**Footnote:** In Scripture the picture of Jesus coming as a thief always carries the idea of judgment.

Reference: **Matthew 24:43**; **Luke 12:39**; **I Thessalonians 5:2** and **4**; **II Peter 3:10**; and **Revelation 16:15**

The church is just an accumulation of individual Christians. If in a spiritual sense, a church is dead, then it died because the Christians that made up that church also \_\_\_\_\_ spiritually.