

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY
The Book of Revelation
Pastor Jim Otte
Winter/Spring, 2021 (April 11, 2021)

Session 7: Revelation 3:1-13

Correction from Previous Lesson: Referencing Isaiah 62:2-4: Isaiah, who lived from 701 B.C. to 681 B.C. during the time when the Assyrian invaders overran the Northern Kingdom of Israel, brought a prophecy of God's judgment and redemption to the people of Israel and Judah. Many survivors of the Assyrian war were carried off into exile. Judah's end would not come until 586 B.C., when the Babylonians would conquer Jerusalem and carry survivors off into exile in Babylonia. In Isaiah 62, he is offering a message, which projected a future of hope and God's control of all things.

(“To the angel of the church in Thyatira write)

26 To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— 27 that one ‘will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery’^[b]—just as I have received authority from my Father. 28 I will also give that one the morning star. 29 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- b. **“I will give authority over the nations”** – sharing in the kingdom of Jesus who reigns eternally.
- c. **“will rule with an iron scepter”** – nations who reject the gospel will be crushed like pottery.
- d. **“I will also give that one the morning star.”** – all who remain faithful to Jesus will be in relationship with Him forever.
- a. **Revelation 22:16**. *“I, Jesus, have sent my angel^[a] this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”*

“To the angel^[a] of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits^[b] of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

- a. **“Sardis”** – Sardis, at one time (540 B.C.), had been the richest city in the world. Prosperity returned in 218 B.C., but the city was eventually conquered because it

was “*sleeping in security.*” People trusted solely in the strength of its walls and armed forces, but neglected the vigilance its citizens needed, as well. When John wrote Revelation, the city had been rebuilt by Tiberius, in the wake of a devastating earthquake in 17 A.D. It became the center of the woolen trade in Asia Minor and was very wealthy. It was also known as a pleasure-loving city.

- b. **“reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”** – while not suffering from the sins of false doctrine, the church seems to have slipped into a spirit of lethargy and carelessness – perhaps reflecting the overall attitude of the community. It became a church which was satisfied with itself.
 - a. **Question:** In what ways might a church become satisfied with itself, to the point that it becomes “dead” attitude and action?
 - b. **James 2:26.** *What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

²⁰ *You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless^{dj}?*
 - c. **“Wake up! Strengthen what remains...your deeds unfinished”** – **“Wake”** (literally “be continually awake and discerningly alert” to what is really going on)
 - d. **“Remember what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent.”** – Jesus’ remedy is for them to return to the foundation of their faith: The Word! Not merely, though, as an intellectual exercise or a source of pride – but as an empowered motivation to act in faith, hope, and love.

⁴ Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. ⁶ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- a. **“Yet you have a few people”**
- b. **“walk with Me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.”**
 - a. **“worthy”** – not determined by the goodness of a person’s works, or even sincerity of intent. Worthiness is based on faith, trusting in the worthiness of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection.
- c. **“I will never blot out the name of that person...book of life”** –

a. **Exodus 32:30-33.** *The next day Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”³¹ So Moses went back to the Lord and said, “Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold.³² But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.”³³ The Lord replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book.*