

When Jesus Comes To Church

6) Sardis And The Seven Spirits

'And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: 'I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead'"'
(Rev.3:1)

The word for 'alive' is associated with the word *zoe*, not *bios*, i.e. inner, not outer life

The authentic Christian life is a life of abiding in Him enjoying His life

But this church was dead because it was trusting in the flesh, not the Spirit

Examples:

- ✓ **Living off past glory. Our confidence is then in experience from the past instead of dependence on the Spirit today**
- ✓ **Replacing the life of the Spirit with rules, formulas, handbooks, committees, etc. *'I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death'* (Rom.7:9-10) *'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life'* (2 Cor.3:5-6). **The law is a ministry of death****

✓ **Dead orthodoxy. 7 churches as Church Age:**

1. **Ephesus: The Apostolic Church - AD 30-100**
2. **Smyrna: The Persecuted Church - AD 100-313**
3. **Pergamos: The Compromising Church - AD 313-600**
4. **Thyatira: The Church of the Dark Ages - AD 600-1517**
5. **Sardis: The Reformation Church - 1517-1648**
6. **Philadelphia: The Missions Church - 1648-1900**
7. **Laodicea: The Apostate Church - 1900-Present**

✓ **The most orthodox church is the most dead**

This church desperately needed the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit restores and revives

Jesus comes to them as *'He who has the seven Spirits of God*'. Not seven spirits, but the seven-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit

Just as the seven churches expressed the total condition of the one church age, so the seven spirits are seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit

'And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God'

(Rev. 4:5)

*'The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the
Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of
knowledge and of the fear of the LORD'
(Isa.11:2)*

**White light is single but when a ray of light is
broken by the prism of a raindrop there are
seven beautiful colours and each is a light**

The 7 lights are one

This is symbolized by the Menorah

THE BRANCH, FROM THE ROOTS OF JESSE



- ✓ **The Spirit of the LORD. Jesus in His humanity lived in dependence on the Spirit. Jn.3:34**
- ✓ **Then three couplets:**
- ✓ **Wisdom = Contrasted with wisdom of the world
Understanding = in Hebrew has the idea of a sharp sense of smell. Can discern motives etc.**
- ✓ **Counsel = to give advice or direction. Might = empowerment to do. Contrast the law. Religion has a form of godliness with no power**
- ✓ **Knowledge = God has perfect knowledge of all things - past, present and future. Omniscient.
Fear of the LORD = *Yare* is a reverential fear.
Carnal, cringing fear makes us draw away from God, the fear of the LORD draws us to Him**

Light in the tabernacle:

- **Outer court – natural light, human reason**
- **Holy place – spiritual light; illumination from the Spirit**
- **Most holy place – Shekinah glory. No need for natural light or Bible then. But now we see through a glass darkly so we need the Spirit to illuminate us**
- **Note: It was a lampstand in the Holy Place, not a candlestick (KJV). Candles give light by the consumption of themselves. The lamp gave light by means of the oil. The light was not in the lamps, but the oil**

'Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God'

(Rev.3:2)

*'Strengthen the things that remain' ...
'Repent'*

**It is possible for a dead church to
be revived**

**If there was no hope then Jesus would
not have bothered coming to this Church**

'Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you'

(Rev.3:3)

This reminds us of Paul's letter to the Galatians:

'This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?'

(Gal.3:2-3)

'You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy'

(Rev.3:4)

The Greek for few is *oligos*, meaning little, small, few in number, the minority (see Matt.7:13,14; 20:16; 1 Pet.3:20)

Revival often starts with a remnant who are alive – their prayers, witness, etc.

'White' - not a dead whiteness, which is the absence of colour, but a glorious, glistening white like that on the Mount of Transfiguration. The glory once hidden was revealed

The imputed righteousness of God manifests itself on the outside in sanctification

'He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels'
(Rev.3:5)

Blotting out a name here is not a reference to losing our salvation but to reigning with Christ

In the first century the names of citizens were recorded in a register. When someone died their name was removed

Only they who truly live by Jesus Christ, and by Him alone will reign with Him

This is the meaning of other terms such as 'losing our crown', 'I never knew you', etc.