**Seoul Grace Community**

**Revelation: A Study of Seven Churches**

**“Your Life”**

**Revelation 3:1-6**

**August 14, 2016**

1. **Introduction**
   1. Sardis—A reputation for being alive, but you are dead (v.2)—what does this mean for us?
      1. These letters were all written to urban churches in rather large cities of industry, finance and trade
      2. These letters were all written to Christians who would be working the marketplaces—buying, selling, living
   2. How do have a dual citizenship living out your life here on earth day to day when you know you belong to another place?
      1. To be an urban church that stays true and doesn’t assimilate to the cultural norms
      2. The values of the city will inevitably conflict at times with the values of the city of God
         1. How you spend your money, your time
         2. How you use your resources
         3. How you network and make friends
      3. The problem here is with assimilating to the surrounding culture and losing the Christian vitality within the church
2. **Spiritual Death** 
   1. Nothing positive is said here about the church
      1. They had a good reputation (v.1) but they were living off of their past glory.
      2. As the city decayed so did the church there.
      3. This is a cautionary tale for us. Your reputation and appearance can look like a good Christian yet we have no life inside.
         1. Sardis as a city had a reputation—a huge wall that was unconquerable, and they were proud of this
         2. But we know they were conquered once by an invading army because a soldier noticed a back door entrance into the city and they came in at night (Syrians under Antiochus the Great in 195 BC)
         3. This is most likely why Jesus says to “arouse” yourself or he will come in the night
         4. A church, a Christian, can be so in name and be living off of that past glory—dead but not even aware of it—slowly, slowly assimilating to the world and losing its vitality
         5. C.S. Lewis *The Screwtape Letters:* “Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one--the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”
   2. The church in Sardis existed, but Jesus says it has no life (v. 2)
      1. There's a big difference between living and existing.
      2. You can be a church without a heartbeat. No pulse.
      3. They needed to be “aroused”—woken up, “roared” back to life
   3. They had soiled their clothes (v. 4)
      1. Would have meant something to the church here because Sardis was famous for being labeled the first community to discover the art of dyeing wool
      2. But here Jesus says that almost all of them have soiled their clothes (he says there are only a few who haven’t soiled—(v. 4)
         1. Why is this so interesting? Because Sardis had a good reputation, but Jesus is basically saying that you have soiled yourself and you don’t even know it!
         2. We have the stains all over us but we’ve worn them so long we hardly know we are stained or willing to admit as much
3. **Spiritual Rescue**
   1. Jesus isn't necessarily just scolding them.
      1. Remember—these are love letters to his followers
      2. Bride/groom imagery—bringing them back into bed with him)
      3. He wants them back (v.3—he wants them to remember and come back to him)
   2. He's challenging them to find their spiritual pulse again.
      1. Arouse yourselves—become alive again!
      2. Breathing on us to wake us
      3. This is why Jesus says he came to give life and give it abundantly (John 10:10)
      4. Not that we would be half-hearted beings—not just exist—but to pulsate with life as we live out our faith
   3. How do you hear him roar to wake you to life again? Look at what he gives the church here:
      1. White robes—these were worn by the king on a triumphal entry after a victory
      2. And you get the white robe? How?
         1. Jesus takes off his white robe to give it to you
         2. You get victory and he gets your stains
   4. How?
      1. Obey, repent and remember (c.f. v3)
      2. Let him roar you back to life.
         1. Matthew 27:50—Jesus cried out again in a loud voice
         2. As he suffered, Jesus probably was wimpering in agony and pain—sobbing
         3. But this is a CRY!!! It’s loud and it means he’s down “to business”
            1. C.S. Lewis *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*:"And now," said Aslan presently, "to business. I feel I am going to roar. You had better put your fingers in your ears."
            2. Mr. Beaver: “Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight, At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more, When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death, And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again.”
      3. He will roar you back alive when you see him cry out from the cross for you!
         1. He was the king who lost his robe—you get what he deserved because he took what you deserve
         2. This is the only thing that will “arouse” you—“roar” you back into life!!
4. **Conclusion**
   1. Do you want to exist as a church or simply go through the motions while in the church?
   2. Jesus commands the church in Sardis, and us, to take on the white robe of saving grace so that we can be given new life—pulsating, joyful, comforting and restful life
   3. This new life comes when we hear him cry out to his Father on our behalf as he gave himself (and his kingly robe) up for us