



WEEK 3: THE CHURCH IN SARDIS (REVELATION 3:1-6)

Getting started:

1. A recent Barna Group study in the U.S (<https://www.barna.com/research/openness-to-jesus/>) concluded that "hypocrisy of religious people" is one of the biggest obstacles to faith in Christianity. Discuss why people might consider there to be hypocrisy in the church. Is it a fair claim and why it might be regarded by some as a large issue?

Read Revelation 3:1-6

2. **What is Jesus accusing the Church in Sardis of?** The city was situated between two opposing mountains: the Acropolis (high city) on one side, and the Necropolis (dead city) on the other. Scholars believe Jesus is bringing to mind this geography and accusing Sardis of being more like the Necropolis than the Acropolis.
3. How would you describe a "dead" church? What characteristics might you notice?
4. Sardis felt the need to keep up a reputation that didn't speak to the reality of their actual situation. **In what ways do we put on a front as people to hide our true weaknesses? Why do we do this?**
5. The singer Keith Green said: "The World is sleeping in the dark, but the Church just can't fight because it's asleep in the light."
In what areas of your life or in what areas of our church is Jesus calling us to "Wake up" to right now?
6. Sardis' most fortified Acropolis was famous for being captured by enemies twice in history. Both times were due to guards falling asleep and dropping their helmets. Jesus again picks up on this local fact when he says "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." (v3). **What did it look like for the church in Sardis to be on their guard for Jesus' return? What does it look like for us?**

7. In v5 Jesus is contrasting this church's desire to have a "name" among people, with having their "name" written in the book of life and acknowledged before the Father and the Heavenly Host. How does this promise for Christians re-frame our constant desire to be accepted and praised by others?