



## SAVED TO SERVE

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### THE SEVEN CHURCHES: SARDIS, PART 1

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will continue our series studying the seven churches of Revelation. We will focus on the church of Sardis and find out how its message applies to us today.

"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world." {AA 585.3}

2. Read Revelation 3:1. What does Sardis mean, and what time period does the church of Sardis cover? \_\_\_\_\_

"If the dates of the preceding churches have been correctly fixed, the period covered by the church of Sardis must commence about the year 1798. Sardis signifies "prince or song of joy," or "that which remains." We then have before us, as constituting this church, the reformed churches, from the date above named to the great movement which marked another era in the history of the people of God." {DAR1909 392.2}

3. Read Revelation 3:1. What do the seven Spirits of God represent? Who is the fire a symbol of in scripture? Revelation 4:5; Acts 2:1-4

4. Read Revelation 5:6. The seven Spirits of God have seven horns and seven eyes. What do horns represent? Daniel 8:7; Habakkuk 3:4 power

5. What do eyes represent? Ephesians 1:18; Proverbs 4:7; 15:3 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Note: The number seven in the Bible points to completion (Genesis 2:2, 3). The seven Spirits represent the complete power of the Holy Spirit and the omnipotence (all powerful), omniscience (all knowing), and omnipresence of God (everywhere at the same time).

7. How is the complete power of the Holy Spirit described, and how many times is it mentioned and referenced in Isaiah 11:2? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What do the seven stars represent? Revelation 1:20; Galatians 4:14; Acts 6:15, 8 \_\_\_\_\_

9. Note: The seven stars represent God's messengers who bear a complete message. What is this complete message which God wants His people to bear to the world? The Everlasting Gospel, The Three Angels' Messages found in Revelation 14:6-12.

10. What is Christ's rebuke to the church of Sardis? Revelation 3:1 \_\_\_\_\_

11. Based on the following scriptures, what does it mean to have "a name that thou livest, and art dead?" Exodus 20:7; Matthew 7:21-23

12. In what other ways can we misuse God's name? Isaiah 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_

13. Meditate on each verse of the Lord's prayer. Each verse contains principles that we should live out. How are many people living in contrast to the principles laid out in the Lord's prayer?

a) Matthew 6:9 - \_\_\_\_\_

b) Matthew 6:10 - \_\_\_\_\_

- c) Matthew 6:11 - \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Matthew 6:12 - \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Matthew 6:13 - \_\_\_\_\_

14. Instead of professing to follow Christ, many are dead in their sins. What should be our experience like Paul? Galatians 2:20

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15. Read Revelation 3:2. Why did Jesus tell the disciples to watch and pray in Gethsemane? Matthew 26:41

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16. What needed strengthening in Peter's life which we will also need strengthened in our lives? Luke 22:31, 32

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17. Read Revelation 3:3. In the time of Sardis, what was happening which caused Jesus to send this warning to them?

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"A warning is given of a time when errors would come in as a thief to steal away the faith of God's people, when they must watch diligently and be constantly guarded against the delusions of the enemy." {7BC 958.5}

"In Sardis many had been converted through the preaching of the apostles. The truth had been received as a bright and shining light. But some had forgotten the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth, and Jesus found it necessary to send reproof." {7BC 958.6}

"One after another of the old standardbearers had fallen, and some had become wearied of the oft-repeated truths. They desired a new phase of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds. They thought they needed a wonderful change, and in their spiritual blindness did not discern that their sophistries would uproot all the experiences of the past." {7BC 958.7}

"But the Lord Jesus could see the end from the beginning. Through John He sent them the warning, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief" (Manuscript 34, 1905)." {7BC 958.8}

18. In the previous church of Thyatira, the church was experiencing persecution by the Papacy. This ended just before the time of Sardis. Based on history, what is often the condition of God's professed people when persecution ceases for a time?

"There is another and more important question that should engage the attention of the churches of today. The apostle Paul declares that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12. Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is that the church has conformed to the world's standard and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled." {GC 48.3}

19. Jesus' coming as a thief has a few applications in scripture. We will briefly address two of its meanings and go deeper in the next lesson. What event does Jesus' coming as thief point to in 1 Thessalonians? 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; 5:1-2; Matthew 24:3, 42-44

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20. Taking the phrase - "the day of the Lord" from 1 Thessalonians 5:2, what other event does this point to? 2 Peter 3:10, 12, 13; Malachi 4:1; Revelation 20:9, 10; 21:1

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21. To whom does Jesus come as a thief? 1 Thessalonians 5:4, 5 \_\_\_\_\_

22. What should be our experience since we are looking for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? 1 Thessalonians 5:6-9; Ephesians 5:14; 2 Peter 3:11, 14

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