

Spring 2010
Study Questions for Revelation Series

Sold Out, Revelation 3:1-6

Preaching Date: March 7, 2010

Key Sentence:

Wake up! Christian sleepwalking is a dangerous way of being religious.

Outline

I. Jesus sees you when you're sleeping. (Revelation 3:1)

II. Jesus calls us to be alert. (Revelation 3:2-3)

III. Jesus walks with those who are awake. (Revelation 3:4-6)

NOTE: There are several different small groups doing different kinds of studies of Revelation that follow Bob's preaching scheme. This study guide includes:

- I. A list of basic inductive study questions, for those who study the text on their own.
- II. A section of questions pursuing specifics of this text.
- III. A section of questions pursuing personal reflection and application.

The first section will remain the same each week, while the last two sections will be tailored to the specific text.

I. Inductive Study

Pray: seek God's direction and wisdom. Make the study a conversation with God.

Read: Read the passage several times in different versions.

Write down what stood out to you from this initial reading.

Observation:

What is the context? What came before? What follows?

Who is mentioned in the passage? Who is the audience?

Mark the key words and phrases; study them using dictionaries or computer tools.

Mark statements that teach using comparison/contrast, metaphor, or cause/effect.

Break the section into logical pieces and write the main thought of each piece.

Interpretation:

Look for promises that are made, commands that are given, examples that should or should not be followed.

Pursue cross references on specific words and Biblical concepts. Carefully record what you learn from other Scriptures about these key words or ideas.

Summarize the section in one good sentence.

Where does this section fit in the big idea of Scripture: God's redemption plan.

Application:

Are there any commands that you need to obey; sins that you need to avoid; promises that you need to claim; examples that you need to follow.

Write a specific response to this passage, applying the teaching to your own circumstances and relationship with God.

II. Study Questions

Brief Background: Sardis had been conquered twice in its history due to lack of watchfulness: first in 546 BC to Cyrus and second in 218 BC by Antiochus the Great.

1. What does Christ say of himself as the letter begins (verse 1)? Where was this phrase used before in Revelation? What are the implications? What does Isaiah 11:1-2 contribute to your thinking about the seven-fold Spirit of God?

2. Sardis is one of two churches that receives no overall commendation from Christ. The end of verse 1 appears to be headed toward commendation but it turns into a rebuke. What are the implications of having a reputation (or a name) for being alive but actually being dead? What does Jesus teach about this situation in Matthew 23? (13-36, but especially 27-28.)

3. The phrase 'wake-up,' often translated 'be alert' is used more than 20 times in the New Testament. What do you learn about this word and the attitude it invokes in the following verses: Matthew 24:42-44; Matthew 25:13; Matthew 26:38-41; Mark 13:32-37; Acts 20:31; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; 1 Peter 5:8.

4. What are the five imperatives in verses 2 and 3a? How do they relate to the charge of being asleep and nearly dead?

5. Jesus says he will come like a thief? Where have you seen that before in this study? Is Jesus referring to his second coming or some other kind of judgment?

6. The description 'dressed in white' is used often in Revelation. What are the implications? (Rev. 3:18, 4:4, 6:11, 7:9-13, 19:14).

7. In verse 5 Jesus says of the one who overcomes 'I will never blot out his name from the book of life.' How do you reconcile this, if you do, with a doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, or of eternal security? What do the following verses contribute to your thinking: Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1; John 6:38-40; John 10:27-29; Romans 8:28-30, 37-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; Colossians 1:21-23; Titus 3:3-8 (Bob's personal favorite!); Hebrews 3:12-14; Hebrews 6:4-6; 1 Peter 1:3-6.

III. Application Questions

1. Are there areas of hypocrisy in your life? Areas in which you seem (to others) to be spiritually alive, but you know yourself to be comatose or dead?

2. What would it look like in these areas to:

Wake up?

Strengthen what remains?

Remember what you have received and heard?

Obey?

Repent?

3. What kinds of things might you lose if Jesus came 'like a thief' into the areas of your life that are lacking? In other words, what are the possible consequences of your lack of integrity?

4. How does one become worthy of walking with Jesus, dressed in white? Is this what you desire for yourself?