

Celebrating 50 years of Proclaiming Christ
BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH

To the Dying Church

Part 2

Revelation 3:1-6



¹ “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. “ ‘I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. ³ Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. ⁴ Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’





Revelation 3:1a

- “I know your works.
- You have the reputation of being alive,
- but you are dead.

**What we have going on at
this church is a difference
between reputation and
reality at both the
corporate and individual
level.**



**From the outside looking in
others think church XYZ is
ALIVE!**



**But Jesus knows their works and
this church is at death's door.**



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**How does this
happen?**



**When the majority of people
who participate in the life of a
church are NOT born from
ABOVE, blood-washed saints,
who adore GOD and the gospel
of Jesus Christ the church is on
death's door.**





Matthew 7:14

For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.



Revelation 3:2 (ESV)



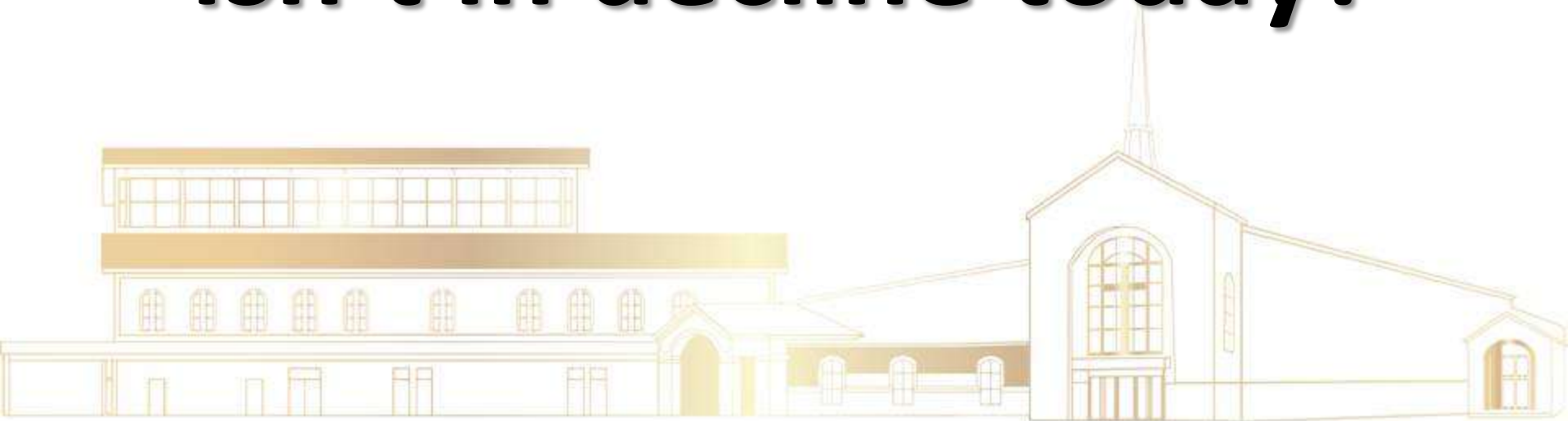
•Wake up then,

Nearly every week I receive some news that causes me to wonder if a church member is saved.

This past week it happened twice.

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**What mainstream
Christian denomination
isn't in decline today?**



Between 6,000 and 10,000 churches in the U.S. are dying each year. That means around 100–200 churches will close this week. The pace will accelerate unless our congregations make some dramatic changes.

It's tempting to blame secular culture, national politics, or church leaders for the declining evangelical influence in today's culture.

If outside forces and culture were the reasons behind declining and non-influential churches, we would likely have no churches today.

The greatest periods of church growth, particularly in the first century, took place in adversarial cultures.

Tom Rainer



Revelation 3:1



- I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Do you see the dichotomy?

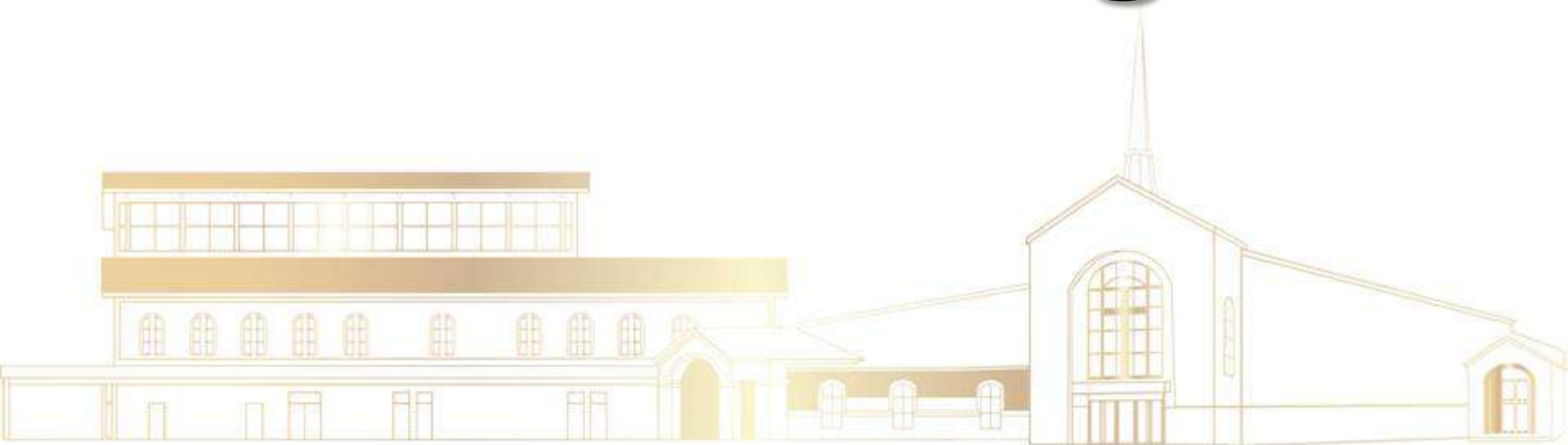
Revelation 3:2 (ESV)



- Wake up then, and strengthen what remains that was about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.

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Strengthen
Make Stronger



**What are the things
that need to be
made stronger
in today's church of
Sardis?**



Revelations 3:2



- **Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:**

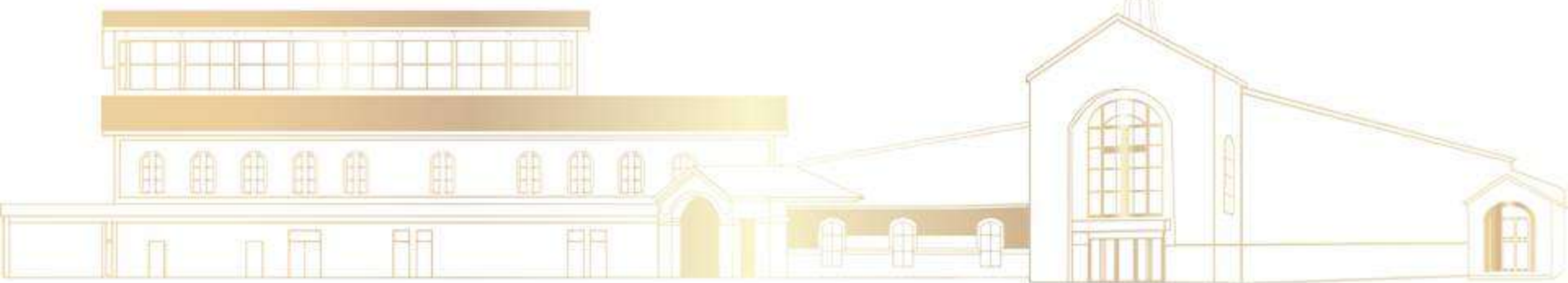
**What are the things
ready to die?**

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Make Stronger

#1

**Commitment to the
Authority of Scripture**



**Nothing is more of a
litmus test as to one's
orthodoxy than personal
commitment to the
authority of the Bible as
the inspired Word of God.**

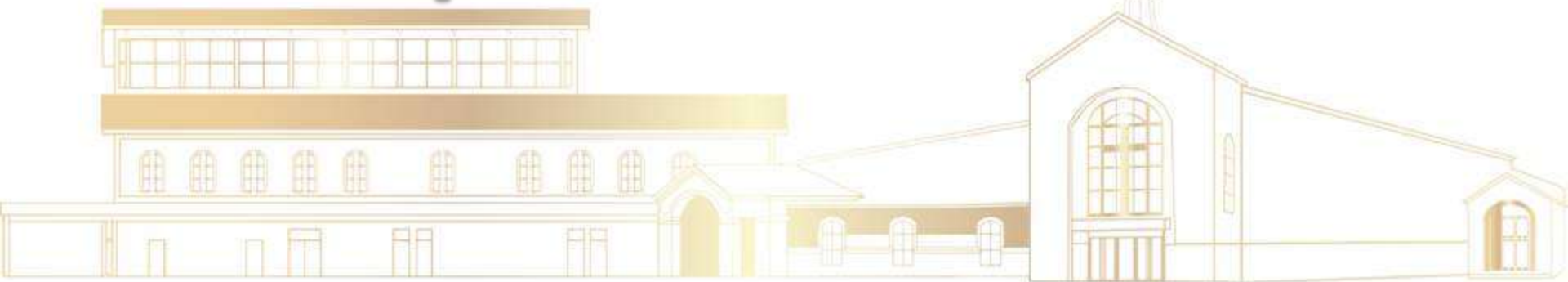


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Make Stronger

#2

**Christ-exaltation &
Gospel-centeredness**



Consider the reality that nearly everything (virtually all) I know about God, Christ, the Spirit and the Gospel comes from the Bible.

Without the Bible what do I have?



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**How can I be
committed to Christ
and NOT be committed
to the Word that
reveals Christ?**



How does a church end up like Sardis?

A reputation of being alive but in reality it is nearly dead.



2 Corinthians 4:5

- For **we preach** not ourselves, but **Christ Jesus the Lord**; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

**They don't preach
Christ.**



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Christ Jesus



The Lord



What is being preached at the church at Sardis?

**If you preach the Bible you will preach Christ.
If you preach from Dr. Seuss Christ is not
exalted.**



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When I say the Person and Work of Jesus.

What do you think about?



In the church @ Sardis

- **Salvific Belief = 's Intellectual Assent**
- **Conversion is NOT Emphasized**

Ask & Answer

Is the absolute necessity of saving faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ emphasized?

Which gospel is preached in the church?



James 2:18

- But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.”
- Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.



James 2:19

- You believe that God is one; you do well.
- Even the demons believe
- —and shudder!



In the church @ Sardis

- **Personal Holiness is not a Priority**
- **Faith w/o works is Acceptable**
- **Progressive Sanctification is Set-Aside**



Hebrews 12:8

- If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children **and not sons.**



In the church @ Sardis

- **Perseverance is not a Priority**
- **Church Membership is a Joke**
- **Church Discipline is Dead**

**Tolerance is
Esteemed**



**We must ask and
answer:**

**What does it mean to
believe on/in the Lord Jesus
Christ with all your heart?**



Believing on the Lord Jesus for Salvation is NOT the same as believing that Claritin relieves my runny nose.

Salvific Faith includes:

- **Trust & Expectation**
- **Dependence & Reliance**
- **Confidence & Conviction**
- **Adoration & Assurance**
- **Gratitude & Obedience**
- **Self-Denial & Submission**
- **Followship & Faithfulness**



2 Corinthians 13:5

- Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!



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Turn to

2 Peter 1:5-10



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#3

**Spirit-filled Exegetical
Preaching of the Word**



**Notice we don't just say
"Exegetical Preaching of the
Word."**

We say "Spirit-filled..."



We must pray.

**Authentic Salvation
is a work of the
Holy Spirit.**



2 Timothy 4:2

[Paul told Timothy]

- **Preach the word;**
be instant in season, out of
season; reprove, rebuke,
exhort with all
longsuffering and doctrine.



When the preacher believes that the Bible was inspired by God and is the preserved Word of God good for teaching [doctrine], correction, reproof, and instruction [training] in righteous living he can boldly insist that the people of God give heed to what is being said.

When the preacher loses confidence in the authority of the Word of God—preaching becomes lessons, discussions, encouragement, pithy sayings, helpful nuggets, etc.

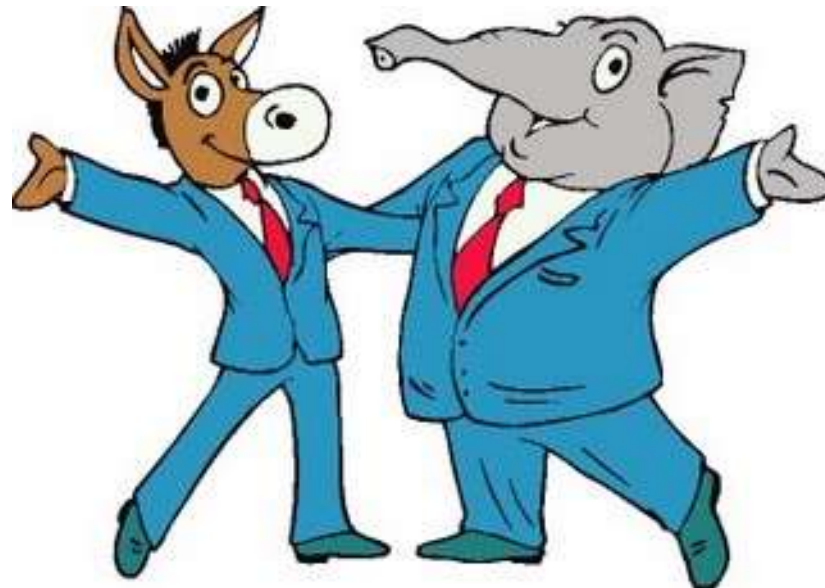


2 Corinthians 4:5

- For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.



- **Personal stories are minimized**
- **Preaching politics is pointless**
- **Persuasion is a work of the Lord**
- **Power comes from the Spirit of God**



Acts 20:27

- for I did not shrink from declaring to you **the whole counsel of God.**

When you exegete all of the Bible
you land on hard passages like
Matthew 7



Matthew 7:21-23

- Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; **but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.** ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³ And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**



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#4

**Authentic Worship
(Love for God)**



John 4:23

- But the hour is coming, and is now here, **when the true worshipers will worship** the Father in spirit and truth,



**True worshippers are those who
have been BORN from ABOVE.**

**This rebirth—conversion—
transformation make us new
creatures in Christ who love Our
God, His Son, the Spirit and the
gospel and it manifests itself in
worship.**



John 4:23

- But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, **for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.**



**What is the
GREATEST of the
GREAT
Commandments?**



Matthew 22:37-38

- And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.
- This is the great and first commandment.



**The absence of worship
and love for God from
the congregation is clear
evidence that the
assembly is at death's
door.**



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#5

Male Leadership



The absence of male leadership in mainline denominational churches has NOT made them stronger.

There has to be a correlation between the absence of male leadership at the corporate level of the church and the home and the decline of the church and family.



1 Timothy 2:13

- For Adam was first formed, then Eve.



In how many places and situations is 'church' or Christianity thought of as something for women and children?



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#6

**Iron-Sharpening-Iron
Relationships**



Proverbs 27:17

- Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.



Hebrews 10:24

- And let us consider
how to stir up one
another to love and
good works,



Revelation 3:3



- Remember, then, what you received and heard.
- Keep it, and repent.

**Christ tells them to remember
what the Apostle taught (what you
received and heard) and keep it.**

Hear the call to persevere.

“And Keep It.”



Keep yourself unspotted from the world (James 1)

Keep yourselves from idols (1 John 5)

Keep yourselves in the love of God (Jude 21)

Keep those things written in it (Rev 1)

Keep the commandments of God (Rev 12 & 14)

Keep the sayings of this book (Rev 21)



Revelation 3:3b



- **If you will not wake up,**
I will come like a thief, and you
will not know at what hour I
will come against you.

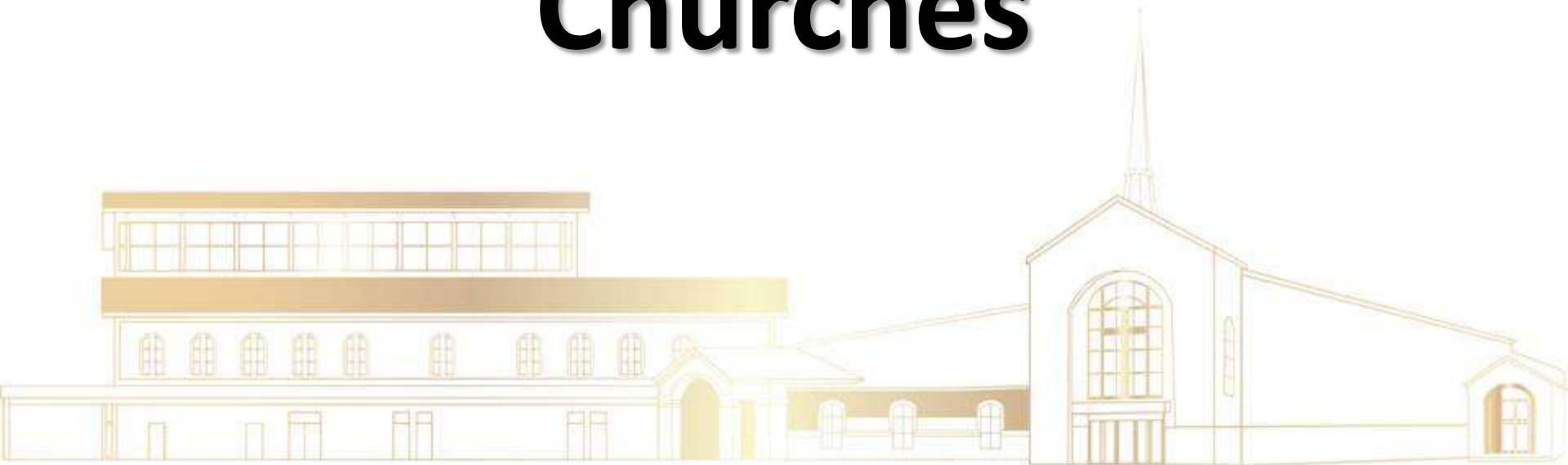
Revelation 3:4



- Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

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God knows who is Saved in the Dead Churches



Revelation 3:5



- The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life.
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