

# WEEK FIVE

## SARDIS: WAKE UP

### GETTING STARTED

Choose one of the following discussion starters:

- What time in the morning do you typically wake up? Does this differ from your preferred time to wake up?
- Who knows you better than anyone else on earth? How did this relationship develop?

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*Read Revelation 3:1-6.*

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### I AM ...

Alert. In Revelation 3:1 Jesus says, “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.’”

*See page 106 for more insight.*

- Jesus describes himself in this way:
  1. He who has the seven spirits of God (meaning the one Holy Spirit over all the churches).
  2. He who has the seven stars (meaning he has a solid grasp of the church’s true identity). In short, Jesus is alert, not sleeping on the job!
- Do you ever find yourself in a difficult circumstance, wondering if or acting as if Jesus is unaware of your need?

## **I KNOW . . .**

You (Revelation 3:1).

*See page 108 for more insight.*

- There's a huge difference between reputation and character. Reputation is what you allow others to see in you. Character is what you and the Lord see in you. What are some of the ways that people manage their reputations? How about you?
- Read Psalm 139 as a group, listening for the depth of God's knowledge of his children.

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*Watch the video for week five.*

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## **I HAVE . . .**

This against you: You are dead (Revelation 3:1).

*See page 110 for more insight.*

- Sardis was facing decay, having disconnected from the life-giving vine of Jesus Christ. Reputation can only last so long apart from him. As a group, read John 15:1-6 and discuss the importance of "abiding" in order to avoid becoming dead.
- In our book this week, Mike says, "The compromise of today's church is that we can be lulled into an unguarded and routine faith, completely unaware that we are being ambushed by the ungodly culture around us" (p. 99). In what ways are we being lulled to sleep today?

## **I SAY . . .**

Wake up (Revelation 3:2).

*See page 112 for more insight.*

- In Thursday's daily devotional we read that Sardis had been built on a hill, and thus it was nearly impossible for enemies to threaten it. Yet Sardis had been overthrown in 549 BC and 218 BC

because the guards had fallen asleep! Once again in the first century, Sardis was guilty of falling asleep rather than being vigilant in their faith.

- In the writing this week, Mike recommends six spiritual disciplines to wake up our souls (see pp. 101-3):
  1. try a prayer journal
  2. go on a fast
  3. go on a short-term mission trip
  4. serve in your church
  5. give to your church
  6. read Christian books
- Which of these disciplines will become the holy caffeine to keep you alert in your faith journey?
- How can the group hold you accountable in this pursuit?
- What in your church has the potential to die (and needs to be awakened)?

## **I WILL . . .**

Come like a thief (Revelation 3:3).

*See page 114 and the video teaching for more insights.*

- As a group, read the following passages, which speak of Jesus coming “like a thief.”
  1. Matthew 24:36-44
  2. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
  3. 2 Peter 3:10
  4. Revelation 16:15
- How would you paraphrase these passages to communicate the “big idea” at a fourth-grade level?

## **I PROMISE . . .**

I will never blot his name out of the book of life (Revelation 3:5).

*See page 116 for more insight.*

- Earlier in this letter to Sardis, Jesus says, “I know you.” Now he promises, “I will confess his name before my Father.” In a similar way, we read of Jesus’ intimate knowledge of us and his commitment to recognize us before the Father (Matthew 10:29-32).
- Read Matthew 10:29-32 as a group. What does this promise from Jesus mean to you personally?
- How does our ability to stay awake lead to resting in Jesus’ promises?