Main Thought: Jesus Christ accurately inspects (2:23) his churches with “x-ray” vision – looking not on the externals but on the internals.

Sardis – The Feeble Church (1-6).

- 50 miles east of Ephesus; a center for trade (5 roads intersect); a military town with a 1500 ft. acropolis forming an impregnable fortress.
- They worshiped Artemis, one of the “nature cults” (Ephesus – Acts 19:24).

Appraiser (1a).
- The words of Christ who holds in his hand the seven stars (pastors?).
- Holy Spirit (1:4) – seen in the seven spirits before his throne (Isa. 11:2).

Accusation (1b).
- They did not live up to their reputation. They were considered an ALIVE church but the truth was they were DEAD (Jam. 2:17; 2 Cor. 6:9; 2 Tim. 3:5).
- This is called HYPOCRISY like the white washed tombs (Matt. 23:27-28).
- The church became complacent – they had no doctrinal problems, no opposition, no persecution; they had grown comfortable (1 Cor. 11:17).

There was reputation without reality, form without force . . . they gloried in past splendor, but ignored present decay.”

Admonition (2-3).
1. Wake up – you had fallen asleep (16:15; Matt. 24:42; Rom. 13:11; Eph. 5:14). You need to STRENGTHEN (ESTABLISH) what you have (Rom. 1:11; 16:25; 1 Thess. 3:2, 13; 2 Thess. 2:17; 3:3; Jam. 5:8; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Pet. 1:12). You have an “incomplete” on your report card.
2. Remember – what you RECEIVED and HEARD was from God (1 Thess. 2:13).
3. Obey – put into practice what you RECEIVED and HEARD (Phil. 4:9).
4. Repent – you should “turn” immediately (Ezek. 14:6; Jer. 5:3; Acts 3:19) before it is too late.

Approval (4-6).
- God always has his REMNANT (Noah [Gen. 6:8]; Lot [2 Pet. 2:7]; Elijah [Rom. 11:3-4]).
- A few had not soiled their clothes. They will walk with Christ dressed in white for they are worthy (4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:14).
- These OVERCOMERS are eternally secure and will never to be blotted out of the book of life (17:8; Ex. 32:32-33; Psa. 69:28; Heb. 12:23).
- These will be acknowledged before God and his angels (Matt. 10:32-33).