

COMMIT TO MEMORY

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel,
“Seek Me that you may live.” - Amos 5:4

CONSIDER

The Christians in Sardis had gotten so self-sufficient in their own minds that they didn't feel they needed the Holy Spirit anymore. They were educated, affluent and at ease. They believed they could do everything on their own, which is a very dangerous place to be.

The Holy Spirit does not do His work apart from your connection and cooperation to Him and with Him. A life devoid of the Spirit of God is a life open to defeat in every area. It's just a matter of time.

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CONNECT

Remember to always open your group time together in prayer. Invite God's Spirit to manifest Himself fully in your midst, to soften your hearts and open your ears to His Word as well as to guard your lips—seasoning each person's speech as with salt. Keep specific prayer requests to be covered at the end of the meeting, if possible. This is a time to connect with each other and to connect with God as we open our time together.

Share your responses to these questions as you open up your time of connection.

How has the Holy Spirit been speaking to you with regard to the subjects we are studying?

Which church do you find yourself identifying with the most thus far? Why?

Are there any specific needs you are bringing to the study this week?

This is a time to connect with each other and to connect with God as we open our time together.

After this preliminary connecting time is completed, watch the DVD teaching by Pastor Evans on this session. Next, have someone read the discussion questions in the Concentrate section and guide the discussion.

CONCENTRATE

Use the following questions and Scripture passages to guide your discussion of the teaching you just experienced from Pastor Evans and the discussion from your group members.

1. Read Revelation 3:1-6

The church of Sardis had a great reputation, but what was lacking?

Is it possible to have notoriety for being spiritual but simultaneously be spiritually dead in God's economy? What can lead to this?

2. According to Pastor Evans' teaching, what is the primary role of the Holy Spirit? What happens if the Holy Spirit is not engaged in your life and the life of the church?

3. The members of the church of Sardis were told to "wake up." What were they to do once they woke up?

4. Pastor Evans tells us that the spiritual had become secondary to the secular for the people of the church at Sardis. Give some examples on how this might be happening today in the overall body of Christ?

Notes

(Use this space for personal notes on the lesson and discussion.)

CONVERGE

“be doers of the Word,
not just hearers”
- James 1:22

In this section, talk with the group about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study.

Discuss the following questions:

1. Describe how the struggles of the church at Sardis may be common to the contemporary church in America today? How do they differ?
2. The Bible instructs us to encourage one another. Yet in this message to the church at Sardis, we discover that too many compliments may lead to complacency. Discuss the tension between offering encouragement and going overboard? Is there such a thing as too much attention on any one person, activity or church?
3. When we find ourselves spiritually “asleep” what can we do to “wake up”?
4. How can you take the message to the church at Sardis and apply it to your personal life? Provide tangible and practical examples that may also help someone else who is listening to what you have to say.

Focusing
on practical
applications of
what we've
learned in this
lesson in
order to better
align our life
choices with
God's truth
and will.

To close your time together, spend some time worshiping God together—praying, singing, reading Scripture. Use the Prayer and Praise to keep track of how God answers prayer.

CONTINUE

Rest, and allow the Lord to lead you as you seek Him through His Word.

The following section is for you to use personally on your own as you continue in the week's topic throughout the next few days. Pray and ask the Lord to open your ears to truly hear His truth and apply it in your life. If you want to, feel free to write what you learn in the margins or in the Notes section of this week's lesson.

Day 1

Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face continually. - 1 Chronicles 16:11

REFLECT:

How can you practically seek God continually?

In what way can you benefit from having God's strength in your life and not only relying on your own?

Day 2

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. - Hebrews 11:6

REFLECT:

Is there a particular area that the Lord has been convicting you to go deeper in your faith with Him?

Think of one action step you can take to show Him a deeper faith this week?

Be mindful of His presence as you seek Him more and more each day. Take time to journal any personal moments the Lord gives you with Himself that are unique to your normal time with Him.

Day 3

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. - James 4:8

REFLECT:

What does it mean to be double-minded?

How can you develop a greater fervency for God and a greater focus on Him so that you will reduce any double-mindedness in your life? ?

Day 4

And those who know Your name will put their trust in You, For You, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You. - Psalm 9:10

REFLECT:

In what area do you feel that God is not very present right now?

Commit to seeking what He says in His Word about this area of your life and seeking Him in prayer concerning this matter.

Day 5

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel, "Seek Me that you may live." - Amos 5:4

REFLECT:

Have you experienced times in your life when you have not sought the Lord as much as you could have?

What were the results of those times?

Why is it important to seek God continually if you are going to live as an overcomer?