

Sardisean Church Age Lessons

Part 1:

Introduction and Review:

In this lesson, we will be starting our review of the Sardis Church Age. Does anyone know what the fifth church age is? Sardis

- Who can remember the first church age? Ephesian
- Who were the messengers to the second, third, and fourth church ages? Irenaeus, Martin, and Columba
- What was the reward promised to the overcomers in the Thyatirean age? Power over the nations and the Morning Star

Lesson 1: You will need a glass for this lesson.

Read Revelation 3:1-6.

- Listen closely while Brother Branham reveals who the fifth church age messenger was and the dates to the Sardis Church Age.

Now, tonight, we're beginning on the fifth church age, which is the church age of Sardis, S-a-r-d-i-s, Sardis. And the messenger to this church age was Martin Luther, becomes more familiar to the Bible scholar or this teacher, or the laity, rather, today. And that church age began in 1520 and ended in 1750, 1520 to 1750; and the age of what we call "Reformation Age." And the complaint was "Using their own name."

60-1209 - The Sardisean Church Age, para 27

- Who was the angel messenger? Martin Luther
- What were the dates for the Sardis Church Age? 1520 to 1750
- Did anyone hear what this age was called? The Reformation Age
- Let's talk about the word "Sardis." Sardis was another one of the cities in Asia minor. Remember that each of the church ages was named after a certain city in Asia minor.
- In the city of Sardis, the people worshipped Cybele and Deoius, which was a form of worship carried on from the "mother and son" concept in the

Pergamean Age (known then as Semiramis and Ninus.) Now in Rome, this same god is given the title of our Lord: he is called the Son of God while she is called the mother of God. Brother Branham tells us that the word Sardis means "dead." There is another meaning to the word Sardis. Listen while Brother Branham tells us what it means in English terms.

And so, Sardis, now we start out. The very word Sardis, the 1st verse. The word Sardis, in the English terms, means, if you want to look it up, means "the escaped one." The true Sardis was "the escaped one." That's what Sardis means, all right, "the escaped one." Now, see, and "the escaped one." 60-1209 - The Sardisean Church Age, para 70

- What does it mean in English terms? The escaped one
- Martin Luther is the best known messenger of all the church ages.

There he saw the futility of the church's imposed works that were to bring salvation, and the Word of God struck home to his heart, "The just shall live by faith." An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 245

- The message of this age is justification.
- Let us listen to the story that Brother Branham tells us, to explain what justification means.

If I had a little glass here I'd show you what...Here, for instance like this bottle here, if it was empty, and I picked it up, and it was just as dirty as it could be...I want to use it. Well now, the first thing I want to do is Justification. I pick it up because I want to use it. It's dirty; I found it out in the—in the pigpen, or wherever it was. Now, if I'm the right kind of person, well, I don't want to put something clean in there I'm going to have to use. I—I have to fix that thing up first. Now, the best thing to do is scour it, clean it, and sanctify it. Is that right? Now, what does the word sanctify mean? "Cleaned and set aside for service." The vessels of the old temple were cleaned and set aside for service.

Now, there's the Church: God picked them up through the Lutheran age, justification; Wesley age, He sanctified them; and in this age He fills them. See? He puts the Life in them. And when this, His Life through the Holy Spirit...The Holy Spirit picked them up; the Holy Spirit sanctified them; the Holy Spirit filled them. 54-0103E - Questions And Answers #2, para 70-71

Hold up a glass.

- What does it mean to justify this glass? To pick it up...out of the pigpen
- What does it mean to sanctify this glass? To wash it and set it aside for service
- When it is filled, that is the Holy Spirit. This church age is the start of that process: Justification.
- Brother Branham says this age is also called the Lutheran age.

It's just, as many times as I have taught it, like picking up a glass out in the chicken yard. Justification is "picking it up, ready to use it," with a purpose in heart. That's what God does to the sinner. He is still filthy. 58-1007 - Church Order, para 8

- We have learned that Martin Luther was the messenger for the Sardis Church Age. The age was a reformation age. His message was that the "Just shall live by faith." How happy we are to be justified and not only justified, but also sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit!

Part Two

Introduction and Review:

In our last lesson, we began learning about the Sardisean Age.

- Do you remember who the messenger was? Martin Luther
- What was his message to the age? The just shall live by faith
- It has been revealed to us that the star, or messenger angel, for the fifth church age was Martin Luther. This was the Sardisean Church Age, an age of reformation, also known as the Lutheran age. Martin Luther came forth preaching that "The just shall live by faith."

Lesson:

- This is what Brother Branham says about this church age.

I wish it could be said that the Sardisean Age was a restoration instead of a reformation. I cannot say that. The Word does not call it a restoration, but certainly calls it a reformation. Had it been a

restoration, that age would have been another Pentecostal age. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 257

- Brother Branham called this age the “reformation age.” The word reformation means: the action or process of reforming an institution or practice. This church age messenger certainly was doing just that.
- This “reformation” started with a key event in history. Let us listen to the quote while Brother Branham explains what happened.

That lasted until October the thirty-first (If you’re all putting it down.) October the thirty-first, 1570 A.D., when Martin Luther nailed his ninety-fifth thesis on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, and from that time the Reformation was on. Did you get those dates? Let me get it again so you’ll be sure. October the thirty-first, 1570 A.D., when Martin Luther nailed his ninety-fifth thesis on the church door at Wittenberg, W-i-t-t-e-n-b-u-r-g, Wittenberg, Germany. From that date the reformation set in, the fire begin to fly. He protested that Catholic church standing there, that in his hand like that, he said, “This be the holy Body of Christ? It’s a wafer and a little wine!” And “wham!” he throwed it on the floor. That’s right. 60-1209 - The Sardisean Church Age, para 141

- Martin Luther knew that wafer wasn’t the literal body of Christ nor was the wine His literal blood. He knew the Word of God said “the just shall live by faith.” He knew salvation was from the Lord and not the church. He protested that Catholic church.
- Where did Martin Luther nail his thesis? On the church door in Wittenberg, Germany

Read Revelation 3:1.

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;

- Do you know who the angel of the Sardis Church Age was? Martin Luther

These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;

- Again, the Lord is identifying Himself. Deity is holding the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars.

So we see that the Seven Spirits actually refer to the One Spirit of God working out the will and Word of God in different generations. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 250

Now we can see that Jesus Christ is revealing Himself through the ages by His Spirit in the messengers. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 251

I know thy works,

- In the Church Age Book, page 253, Brother Branham said these works were:
 1. The leadership of the Holy Ghost was replaced with the leadership of a group of men.
 2. The pure Word of God was replaced with creeds, dogmas, church orders, etc.
 3. The worship in the Spirit and Gifts of the Spirit were replaced with literal idol worship, pagan feasts, etc.
 4. Maryolatry was taking a greater place in the Christian worship.

I cannot impress upon you too strongly that this age, though it brought the reformation, was most sternly rebuked by God instead of being praised, because IT SOWED THE SEED OF DENOMINATION THAT ORGANIZED RIGHT BACK TO THE HARLOT, after God had opened a door of escape. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 257

Read Revelation 3:2.

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain,

“Strengthen that which remains, that is ready to die.” There was something missing. My, yes, there certainly was. This age had justification, but it had missed sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 258

- Although this age was not a restoration and didn't bring forth the Holy Ghost, it did bring forth a free Bible and put it back in the laity's hand. The invention of the moveable-type printing press, the forerunner of our modern printing presses, made the Bible accessible to everyone.

Thus we find the great hunger and demand for the Bible could be answered. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 254

So now, the Lutheran revival, what they wanted, to “strengthen.” Now you got the Bible in your hand, now read It! Believe It! Don't lay It up on

the shelf, say, "Well, we got a Bible." That ain't going to do you no good up there. 60-1209 - The Sardisean Church Age, para 160

...that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Do you know what the meaning of "not perfect" really is? It is "unfulfilled." This age was an unfulfilled age. It was just the start of getting back. That is why I said the Bible called it Reformation – not restoration. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 258

Read Revelation 3:3.

They had been given the basic truth of the whole Gospel, "The just shall live by faith," "Salvation is of the Lord." They had heard the truth of the Bible which cast down the doctrines of Rome and set at naught all papal authority. They knew the truth that the church does not save. They understood the Lord's supper. They had light on water baptism. They put out the images. Truth? Why there never was an age with any more men with so much light to shed. They had enough illumination to completely overhaul the old system or start out fresh and let God lead them, line upon line and precept upon precept. They received the truth. They wanted it and heard it. But the question was, how did they hear it? Did they hear it to build upon or was it with the same attitude that many Greeks had — something to discuss and theorize over? Evidently the rich Word of truth was being heard in an academic manner, rather than for practical outworking, for God was demanding a change of mind concerning it. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 262

Read Revelation 3:4.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments;

- Brother Branham says in page 263 of the Church Age Book that names means people. God goes on to say that this church has a few people that are right and not wrong like the majority. These people that were the true saints of God were walking all pleasing unto the Lord. They weren't corrupted by the world. They were in the Spirit and walking in the Spirit.

...and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

- Jesus is the only worthy one. He is saying about these people that:
These are Mine. They are righteous. They are worthy. They shall walk with Me in white. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 264

Read Revelation 3:5.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;

- This is actually a repeat of verse 4. The saints are going to be clothed in shining, exceedingly white garments, just as Jesus is.

...and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,

Names are going to be blotted out of the Book of Life. No names will be blotted out of the Book of Eternal Life for that is another record though contained in the Book of Life. THIS IS THE RECORD: GOD HATH GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE (ETERNAL) AND HE THAT HATH NOT THE SON HATH NOT LIFE (ETERNAL). And those who have that life were in HIM before the foundation of the world. THEY WERE CHOSEN IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 284

...but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Roll call in heaven!...

But no earthly voice will ever sound your name as sweetly as will the voice of God if your name is in the Book of Life and remains there to be revealed before the holy angels. What a day that will be when we hear Jesus say, "Father, they confessed My Name before men in the days of their earthly pilgrimage. Now I will confess their names before Thee and all the heavenly angels. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p. 286

Read Revelation 3:6.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

- Once more the Spirit has spoken. How glad we are to have ears to hear! These promises lap over to every church age and are for us too! We want our names on the Book of Eternal Life.