



**“Reality”  
— Dear Church—  
Small Group Plan**

In Revelation 2, in the letter to Pergamum, Jesus’ language portrays him as a commander threatening war. In the letter to Thyatira he took on the role of a prophet. But here in the letter to Sardis (Vs 3), he says he will come like a thief in the night. Why? Because they are asleep. They have a reputation for life and vitality, but really they are asleep. They are unaware. They are not keeping up. They don’t know what is going on. And while they are living on a past reputation, they are losing the ministry of the present reality. This letter to Sardis faces us with searching questions.

**OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- Would you agree that our culture is obsessed with the outside? How?
- Why is God obsessed with the inside?

**LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...**

**“WAKE UP”**

**PULL OVER ... ADMIT THE PROBLEM ... COME CLEAN**

**Revelation 3:2-3**

<sup>2</sup> **Wake up!** *Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.* <sup>3</sup> *Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.*

- Why is it so difficult for people to admit their weaknesses and failures?
- How would you describe the power of confession or admission?
- Does “wake up” mean admit the problem to yourself, to others or both?

**“STRENGTHEN”**

**START WHERE YOU ARE ... FORTIFY WHAT YOU HAVE ... DON’T LET IT DIE**

**Revelation 3:2-3**

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- What does Jesus see in them that is barely hanging on?

- What is often the last element of personal faith to die?
- What would “strengthen” such a weak and vulnerable faith?

### **“REMEMBER”**

**DIG DEEP ... GIVE IT SERIOUS THOUGHT ... REFLECT ON WHERE YOU BEGAN**

#### **Revelation 3:2-3**

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- How would you describe the power of reflection and contemplation?
- Why is it such a rare habit in today’s culture?
- What is most likely to stop you from taking a regular time of quiet reflection?

### **“OBEY”**

**MAKE A POSITIVE CHOICE ... TAKE THE FIRST STEP ... CHOOSE A FRESH START**

#### **Revelation 3:2-3**

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- Why does a positive choice to move in the right direction feel so good?
- Why can it be extremely difficult to take that first step?
- In addition to hearing and understanding the facts of a fresh start, what else would help a person take the first step?

### **“REPENT”**

**DROP THE PRETENSE ... LET GO OF THE FAÇADE ... RETURN TO REALITY**

#### **Revelation 3:2-3**

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- To travel to the right I must stop traveling to the left. To move forward I must stop moving backward. To “repent” I must \_\_\_\_\_. (fill in the blank).
- Discuss the warning aspects of repent ...  
**“You had better change!”**
- Discuss the encouraging aspects of repent ...  
**“Did you know you can change?”**
- Which aspect did you grow up hearing – the warning or the encouragement? How did it impact your desire to grow and change?

## USE IT / APPLY IT ...

### ***MOVING FROM REPUTATION TO REALITY***

- Reflect on each of the following faith dangers:
- Faith Is In Danger ...
  - ...When It Begins To Worship Its Own Past.
  - ...When Its More Concerned With Following Forms Than Jesus.
  - ...When It Loves Systems More Than People.
  - ...When It Functions More Like A Business Than A Body.
  - ...When It Looks More Like A Club Than A Church.
- Close by asking for God for the courage to admit and the strength and wisdom to change and obey.