Now to the text of **Rev. 3:1**, we have already looked at the "***seven Spirits***" and the "***seven stars***" under our comments on **Rev. 1:4**, so we will not be redundant in talking about them again tonight. "***I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead***."

Sometimes "***works***" can be misleading. Consider the following for examples. **Matt. 7:21-23**; **Luke** **10:38-42**. In both examples what seemed impressive to the casual observer was anything but, in God's eyes. As we learned earlier, works and service are not the same. You can work without serving but you can't serve without working.If you do what you do out of nothing more than a sense of duty or obligation, that is work. If you do what you do out of a sense of love, that is service! That means something! Think of it this way. "***Duty dies; Love lives!***"Duty will eventually lead to simply "***going through the motions without feeling"***. Love, on the other hand, "***invigorates and instills life***".You are thoroughly invested, not just in body, but in spirit!They said the right things and often did the right things but their hearts were not in it. (**Isa.29:13**; **Matt.23:27,28**)

It is for this reason their works were not found perfect before God. (**Rev. 3:2**). In that same verse they are warned to, "***Be watchful***". This doesn't mean a "***passing glance***"or an ***occasional "peek***". It means a ***constant state of awareness***. It means always being "***at the ready***". A church does not die overnight. It dies by degrees. There is a process. Here, they are told to strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die. There were some who were on "life support", at the point of death. Like the city, the church at Sardis had become complacent and fat. It did not face the threat of persecution from Caesar worship; it did not suffer from the malignant slanders of the Jews; It was "safe" from much of the "pressures" that the other churches were under. The reason? It was not particularly standing against the world, the flesh or the devil. It was not "***affecting***" anyone or anything! Much of the church's works were "***pretentious***" or for show.

The warning is to guard, strengthen and hold fast to that which remains and to ***repent*** of that which has "slipped" or "gone astray". (**2 Tim. 4:2-5; Heb. 2:1**) As history reveals to us, the church in Sardis never did heed the message. We see how that it is representative of what became known as the Roman Catholic Church with all its "***tributaries***".

If the church will not watch; if it will not repent, then He will come upon them as "***a thief in the night***". He will not announce His coming. ("...***and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.***") Though we can make a spiritual application to the "church age", this verse "***doctrinally***" finds its application in the "***Tribulation***". When you see references to the "***thief***"it has to do with Christ's 2nd Coming and not the rapture. ( **Matt. 24:42-44**; **1 Thess. 5:2-4**; **Rev. 16:15**)

**Vs.4** speaks of a remnant that has not defiled its garments.We know that in this church age all believers are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. That is, we exchanged our rags (**Isa. 64:6**) for His righteousness. (**2 Cor. 5:21**) The robes we received at salvation were not of our making. (**Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:1-4**)

However, it would seem that aside from the righteousness we received at salvation because of our (***position***) in Christ (**Eph. 1:6)**, we also can acquire "***robes of righteousness***" that are earned through acts of righteousness or righteous living; (***performance***). (**2 Cor. 5:9; Rev. 3:18**) Our "***works of righteousness***" are judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ as to what sort they are. Based upon this judgment, some will be denied certain privileges. (**2 Tim.2:11-13**) Not everyone who is saved is worthy, in the Lord's eyes, to walk with Him or to rule and reign with him. (**Luke 9:62**)

Now, if we look at **Verses 3-5** through the eyes of a Tribulation saint, doctrinally, he is to watch for the Lord's coming (2nd Coming). Trust me, the Tribulation saint will be looking for Him, because He will bring deliverance and salvation with Him.(**Mal.4:2; Rev. 16:15; 19:7-8**) **Vs. 5** talks of "***he that overcometh***". In this age we understand that all believers are overcomers "in Christ"(by ***position***). In the Tribulation the saint must endure, he must keep the commandments (***performance***) and the testimonyof Jesus. (**Rev. 14:12**) If he doesn't, not only will he be denied the right to rule and reign but **Verse 5** tells us that their names will be ***blotted out of the book of life***! We know that this does not apply to the believer in this age because we are sealed. (**Eph.1:13,14; 4:30**) This same warning is given to those who mess with God's word, in the Tribulation.(**Rev. 22:18-19**). Consider the following passages in light of this. (**Matt. 10:32,33; Luke 12:8,9**) To the overcomer there is white raiment and a grand introduction before the Father and His angels! To the one who is not prepared and ready, their names will be blotted out of the book of life. There is no eternal security in the tribulation! In conclusion **Vs. 6** has the LORD once again looking for a listening ear!