

MUSTARD SEED LEADERSHIP

PODCAST

- BY BRENT BRADING -



EP68

Jesus' Letters to Leaders: **SARDIS**

FOR THE GROUP LEADER

These notes have been designed to disciple leaders in round the table small group discussions.

What is in *ITALICS* is meant to be read out loud.

Welcome to this week's Mustard Seed Leadership discussion. The current series is "Jesus' Letters to Leaders"

STEP #1: ACCOUNTABILITY

*Let's get started. The topic of discussion today is "**SARDIS**" But before we start on the new topic, we will usually hold each other accountable about last week's action step.*

Since this is the first in the series, let's go straight to the notes.

STEP #2: READ THE NOTES

Option 1: Let each person in the group take turns reading a section. (Each section is marked with a **READER #**). Go clockwise starting with the Group Leader, and highlight or underline what catches your attention.

Option 2: The leader reads all the sections.

Option 3: Watch the video.

<https://youtu.be/QvJyjrMdi44>

READER 1

Jesus' Letters to Leaders

Jesus writes seven letters to seven messengers or leaders, giving seven lessons on leading victoriously

Previous Lessons:

- 1. EPHESUS** - Kingdom leaders are in love with Jesus
- 2. SMYRNA** - Kingdom leaders understand suffering
- 3. PERGAMUM** - Kingdom leaders know how to wield the sword of God's Word
- 4. THYATIRA** - Kingdom leaders know how to operate in Authority

LESSON #5 - SARDIS

Kingdom Leaders know how to measure success

Revelation 3:1-6 (NIV)

1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars."

READER 2

REVELATION

*Jesus holds the sevenfold Spirit of God (The Holy Spirit) in one hand and the seven stars (the leaders) in the other - **like a balance scale***

Isaiah describes the SevenFold Spirit of God:

Isa 11:2-3

2 “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD— 3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.”

Seven represents completeness and perfection

- So on the one hand Jesus holds His perfect spirit

On the other side: The leaders of the churches

- **NOTE:** Jesus doesn't weigh them against each other

- He weighs them against the Holy Spirit!

REVELATION: Jesus who weighs us or measures us

- Not leader against leader
- Not church against church
- But against His Spirit
- This is why comparing ourselves to each other is so dangerous! It is not a kingdom principle!

BIG IDEA: Jesus is not comparing or weighing us against one another - person against person or church against church - but by His Holy Spirit!

READER 3

CHALLENGE

Rev 3:1b - 3

1 "I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you."

Keyword - REPUTATION

- *Is other people's measure of you*
- *They were living off their reputation - **WHAT OTHERS THOUGHT OF THEM INSTEAD OF WHAT GOD THOUGHT OF THEM***
- **Note:** *"in the sight of God"*

BIG CHALLENGE: *Are you living for the reputation of others (how others see you) or the reputation of God? (How God sees you?)*

- *Are you measuring yourself or church compared to others or remembering the words that God has spoken over you - that's what you measure against!*

EXAMPLE OF SARDIS: *(NIV Study Bible Notes)*
Sardis. Modern Sart. Capital of the ancient kingdom of Lydia, it was a city of great wealth and fame. The acropolis was a natural citadel on the northern spur of Mount Tmolus. It rose 1,500 feet above the lower valley - kind of looked down on the towns and cities around!

- *Compared to others they were wealthy, famous and prominent*

- *And so they were comfortable in their reputation*
 - *They were already ahead in the race*
- COMPARED TO OTHERS **

By other people's measurements you are alive
- doing well! By Jesus' measurements you are dead!

READER 4

BIG QUESTION: WHOSE MEASUREMENT ARE YOU LIVING BY?

- *What is the standard of your life?*
- *Or whose approval are you really living for?*

Galatians 6:4 (NIV) *“Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else”*

WHY IS LIVING FOR THE APPROVAL OF OTHERS SO DANGEROUS?

Galatians 1:10 (NIV) *“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”*

- *Can't be a slave to others opinions and be a servant of God at the same time.*
- *Cannot serve two masters!*

Paul reveals the right attitude:

1 Corinthians 4:3-5 (NIV)

“3 I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. 4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.”

- *Don't care about other people's opinions or judgements of me*
- *Don't even care what I think of me!*

- *What does Jesus think of me?!*

READER 5

HOW DOES JESUS WEIGH US?

Rev3:3 *“Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent.”*

Have you been faithful to what God has spoken and revealed to you?

Illust: We have been given prophetic words from God for the past 21 years

*- I have received prophetic words for 30+ years
- God has given me faith for key revelations from His Word*

- THESE ARE THE THINGS TO MEASURE AGAINST - NOT THE CHURCH OR LEADER DOWN THE ROAD!

REWARD

Rev 3:4-5

4 “Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white.”

Are you living in soiled clothes or dressed in white?

- Living a life comparing yourself to others instead of God’s Word is like someone living in soiled clothes - dirty nappies!

- It stinks!

READER 6

TWOFOLD REWARD:

1. They will walk with Jesus

IT SEEMS THAT THE BEST FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS HAPPENS RIGHT ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF HIS WORD

- Giving full attention to what God is revealing from His Word

- That's where fellowship with Jesus, the Living Word, is at its best!

Example:

- Walking through a door into the nations*
- Launching into a building project dream*
- A guy in the church asking his wife for a date night to learn to start talking!*

2. Jesus will carry their reputation to the Father and the angels

Revelation 3:5 (NIV) *"5 The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels."*

The root of the sin was concern for your own reputation

- Jesus promises to bring your reputation before the Father and His angels if you get this right!*

BIG IDEA: *Don't compare yourself to others. Don't let your reputation define your zeal for the Lord. Let the Lord weigh you according to what He has spoken to you, and let that define success for you*

STEP #3: SHARE YOUR HIGHLIGHT

*Now let's go around the group and take turns sharing what stood out to you the most from what we read. **What stood out to you and why?***

STEP #4: EVALUATION

*I am going to ask each of you in turn to evaluate yourself (From a 5 which is **EXCELLENT**, down to a 1 meaning **LOTS OF WORK NEEDED!**) on how well you are doing in the area of this topic and then share this with the group and why you chose this score.*

STEP #5: Application

Lastly, let's go around the group and answer the following questions:

- 1. Do you struggle with comparison? Do you find yourself measuring yourself according to others around you? Why?*
- 2. What has God been revealing to you recently? From His Word, prophetic words or Holy Spirit inspired instructions. How are you doing - measured to those?*
- 3. How can you make this transition from weighing yourself against others to weighing yourself against what is revealed to you?*

CLOSING

A great way to close off is to pair up briefly for a moment of prayer. Pray for each other that you will succeed in your action steps. Thank everyone for coming and committing to grow as a disciple of Jesus.

For more notes visit:

<https://outlookchurch.co.za/mustardseedleadership>

