THE LIVING DEAD

By Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. Millions of people now living are DEAD.
2. This statement sounds like a paradox, but it is true -- I Tim. 5:6; Rev. 3:1
3. The meaning of death will help us to understand how a person may be DEAD and ALIVE at the same time.
4. DEATH means: Separation
5. One who is separated from Christ and God is dead to God -- Isa. 59:1
6. Many people in the world today are alive physically but dead to the heavenly Father.

I. ONE EXAMPLE OF THE LIVING DEAD IS THE ALIEN SINNER
1. The alien sinner has never been a member of the church -- Col. 1:21
2. Paul tells how he is dead in Ephesians 2:1
   (1) Dead in sin.
3. The alien sinner will remain dead until he obeys the gospel -- Col. 1:13

II. THE DEAD CHILD OF GOD
1. Demas is a good example -- 2 Tim. 4:10
   (1) He "loved this world" -- I John 2: 15 - 17
2. The widow that lived in pleasure of sin -- I Tim. 5:6; Heb. 11:25
3. Backsliders are a class of the "living dead" -- Rom. 8:6
   (1) In this group we find all that have given themselves over to the works of the flesh: Dancers, drinkers, gamblers, fornicators.

III. A LOCAL CONGREGATION CAN BE AMONG THE LIVING DEAD
1. Almost the whole church at Sardis was among the living dead -- Rev. 3: 1,4
2. There were many factors that contributed toward the death of the church in Sardis.
3. Jesus criticized the church in Sardis because of her WORK -- Rev. 3:2
   (1) Every congregation should look at what it is doing.
   (2) And especially to what it is NOT doing.
   (3) God will condemn us just as quickly for failing to do, as for doing the wrong thing.
   (4) When a congregation is not working it is DRIFING and DYING.
4. A failure to "hold fast" was another contributing cause for the church at Sardis being dead -- Rev. 3:3
   (1) They had discontinued to fight -- ceased to run.
   (2) They failed to stand in "defense of the gospel" -- Phil. 1:17; Jude 3
   (3) To "earnestly contend for the faith" had lost its appeal to the church.
   (4) Their only hope was to repent.
5. A failure to watch had contributed to their death -- Rev. 3:3
   (1) A failure to be on guard is a serious charge to soldiers.
   (2) A failure to be on guard is to invite death when the enemy is near.
   (3) Satan is the enemy of Christ and His church--I Pet. 5:8
(4) If we sleep on the job, we invite spiritual death.
(5) Members of the church need to watch:
   1. Their company -- I Cor. 15:33
   2. Their tongue
6. The church at Sardis had become a DEAD church because of sin defilement -- Rev. 3: 4